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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE,

IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND

SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

BY

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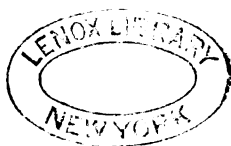
De modo autem hujusmodi historiæ conscribendæ, illud imprimis monemus, ut materia et copia ejus, non tantum ab historis et criticis petatur, verum etiam per singulas annorum centurias, aut etiam minora intervalla, seriatim libri præcipui, qui eo temporis spatio conscripti sunt, in consilium adhibeantur; ut ex eorum non perfectione (id enim infinitum quiddam esset), sed degustatione, et observatione argumenti, styli, methodi, genius illius temporis literarius, veluti incantatione quadam, a mortuis evocetur. — *BACON de Augm. Scient.*

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PREFACE.

THE advantages of such a synoptical view of literature as displays its various departments in their simultaneous condition through an extensive period, and in their mutual dependency, seem too manifest to be disputed. And, as we possess little of this kind in our own language, I have been induced to undertake that to which I am, in some respects at least, very unequal, but which no more capable person, as far as I could judge, was likely to perform. In offering to the public this introduction to the literary history of three centuries — for I cannot venture to give it a title of more pretension — it is convenient to state my general secondary sources of information, exclusive of the acquaintance I possess with original writers; and, at the same time, by showing what has already been done, and what is left undone, to furnish a justification of my own undertaking.

The history of literature belongs to modern, and chiefly to almost recent times. The nearest approach to it that the ancients have left us is contained in a single chapter of Quintilian, the first of the tenth book, wherein he passes rapidly over the names and characters of the poets, orators, and historians of Greece and Rome. This, however, is but a sketch; and the valuable work of Diogenes Laertius preserves too little of chronological order to pass for a history of ancient philosophy, though it has supplied

much of the materials for all that has been written on the subject.

In the sixteenth century, the great increase of publications, and the devotion to learning which distinguished that period, might suggest the scheme of a universal literary history. Conrad Gesner, than whom no one, by extent and variety of erudition, was more fitted for the labour, appears to have framed a plan of this kind. What he has published, the *Bibliotheca Universalis*, and the *Pandectæ Universales*, are, taken together, the materials that might have been thrown into an historical form; the one being an alphabetical catalogue of authors and their writings; the other a digested and minute index to all departments of knowledge, in twenty-one books, each divided into titles, with short references to the texts of works on every head in his comprehensive classification. The order of time is therefore altogether disregarded. Possevin, an Italian Jesuit, made somewhat a nearer approach to this in his *Bibliotheca Selecta*, published at Rome in 1593. Though his partitions are rather encyclopædic than historical, and his method, especially in the first volume, is chiefly argumentative, he gives under each chapter a nearly chronological catalogue of authors, and sometimes a short account of their works.

Lord Bacon, in the second book *De augmentis scientiarum*, might justly deny, notwithstanding these defective works of the preceding century, that any real history of letters had been written; and he compares that of the world, wanting this, to a statue of Polypheme deprived of his single eye. He traces the method of supplying this deficiency in one of those luminous and comprehensive passages which bear the stamp of his vast mind: the origin and antiquities of every science, the methods by which it has been taught, the sects and controversies it has occasioned, the colleges and academies in which it has been cultivated, its relation to civil government and com-

mon society, the physical or temporary causes which have influenced its condition, form, in his plan, as essential a part of such a history, as the lives of famous authors, and the books they have produced.

No one has presumed to fill up the outline which Bacon himself could but sketch ; and most part of the seventeenth century passed away with few efforts on the part of the learned to do justice to their own occupation ; for we can hardly make an exception for the *Prodromus Historiæ Literariæ* (Hamburg, 1659) of Lambecius, a very learned German, who, having framed a magnificent scheme of a universal history of letters, was able to carry it no farther than the times of Moses and Cadmus. But, in 1688, Daniel Morhof, professor at Kiel in Holstein, published his well-known *Polyhistor*, which received considerable additions in the next age at the hands of Fabricius, and is still found in every considerable library.

Morhof appears to have had the method of Possevin in some measure before his eyes ; but the lapse of a century, so rich in erudition as the seventeenth, had prodigiously enlarged the sphere of literary history. The precise object, however, of the *Polyhistor*, as the word imports, is to direct, on the most ample plan, the studies of a single scholar. Several chapters, that seem digressive in an historical light, are to be defended by this consideration. In his review of books in every province of literature, Morhof adopts a sufficiently chronological order ; his judgments are short, but usually judicious ; his erudition so copious, that later writers have freely borrowed from, and, in many parts, added little to the enumeration of the *Polyhistor*. But he is far more conversant with writers in Latin than the modern languages ; and, in particular, shows a scanty acquaintance with English literature.

Another century had elapsed, when the honour of first accomplishing a comprehensive synopsis of literary history in a more regular form than Morhof, was the reward of

Andrès, a Spanish Jesuit, who, after the dissolution of his order, passed the remainder of his life in Italy. He published at Parma, in different years, from 1782 to 1799, his *Origine Progresso e Stato attuale d'ogni Litteratura*. The first edition is in five volumes quarto; but I have made use of that printed at Prato 1806, in twenty octavo volumes. Andrès, though a Jesuit, or perhaps because a Jesuit, accommodated himself in some measure to the tone of the age wherein his book appeared, and is always temperate, and often candid. His learning is very extensive in surface, and sometimes minute and curious, but not, generally speaking, profound; his style is flowing, but diffuse and indefinite; his characters of books have a vagueness unpleasant to those who seek for precise notions; his taste is correct, but frigid; his general views are not injudicious, but display a moderate degree of luminousness or philosophy. This work is, however, an extraordinary performance, embracing both ancient and modern literature in its full extent, and, in many parts, with little assistance from any former publication of the kind. It is far better known on the continent than in England, where I have not frequently seen it quoted; nor do I believe it is common in our private libraries.

A few years after the appearance of the first volumes of Andrès, some of the most eminent among the learned of Germany projected a universal history of modern arts and sciences on a much larger scale. Each single province, out of eleven, was deemed sufficient for the labours of one man, if they were to be minute and exhaustive of the subject: among others, Bouterwek undertook poetry and polite letters; Buhle speculative philosophy; Kästner the mathematical sciences; Sprengel anatomy and medicine; Heeren classical philology. The general survey of the whole seems to have been assigned to Eichhorn. So vast a scheme was not fully executed; but we owe to it some standard works, to which I have been considerably

indebted. Eichhorn published, in 1796 and 1799, two volumes, intended as the beginning of a General History of the Cultivation and Literature of modern Europe, from the twelfth to the eighteenth century. But he did not confine himself within the remoter limit; and his second volume, especially, expatiates on the dark ages that succeeded the fall of the Roman empire. In consequence, perhaps, of this diffuseness, and also of the abandonment, for some reason with which I am unacquainted, of a large portion of the original undertaking, Eichhorn prosecuted this work no farther in its original form. But, altering slightly its title, he published, some years afterwards, an independent universal "History of Literature" from the earliest ages to his own. This is comprised in six volumes, the first having appeared in 1805, the last in 1811.

The execution of these volumes is very unequal. Eichhorn was conversant with oriental, with theological literature, especially of his own country, and in general with that contained in the Latin language. But he seems to have been slightly acquainted with that of the modern languages, and with most branches of science. He is more specific, more chronological, more methodical in his distribution than Andr  s: his reach of knowledge, on the other hand, is less comprehensive; and though I could praise neither highly for eloquence, for taste, or for philosophy, I should incline to give the preference in all these to the Spanish Jesuit. But the qualities above mentioned render Eichhorn, on the whole, more satisfactory to the student.

These are the only works, as far as I know, which deserve the name of general histories of literature, embracing all subjects, all ages, and all nations. If there are others, they must, I conceive, be too superficial to demand attention. But in one country of Europe, and only in one, we find a national history so comprehensive as to leave uncommemorated no part of its literary labour. This was first executed by Tiraboschi, a Jesuit born at Bergamo, and in

his later years, librarian of the Duke of Modena, in twelve volumes quarto : I have used the edition published at Rome in 1785. It descends to the close of the seventeenth century. In full and clear exposition, in minute and exact investigation of facts, Tiraboschi has few superiors ; and such is his good sense in criticism, that we must regret the sparing use he has made of it. But the principal object of Tiraboschi was biography. A writer of inferior reputation, Corniani, in his *Secoli della letteratura Italiana dopo il suo risorgimento*, (Brescia, 9 vols., 1804—1813,) has gone more closely to an appreciation of the numerous writers whom he passes in review before our eyes. Though his method is biographical, he pursues sufficiently the order of chronology to come into the class of literary historians. Corniani is not much esteemed by some of his countrymen, and does not rise to a very elevated point of philosophy ; but his erudition appears to me considerable, his judgments generally reasonable ; and his frequent analyses of books gives him one superiority over Tiraboschi.

The *Histoire Littéraire de l'Italie*, by Ginguéné, is well known : he had the advantage of following Tiraboschi ; and could not so well, without his aid, have gone over a portion of the ground, including in his scheme, as he did, the Latin learning of Italy ; but he was very conversant with the native literature of the language, and has, not a little prolixly, doubtless, but very usefully, rendered much of easy access to Europe, which must have been sought in scarce volumes, and was in fact known by name to a small part of the world. The Italians are ungrateful if they deny their obligations to Ginguéné.

France has, I believe, no work of any sort, even an indifferent one, on the universal history of her own literature ; nor can we claim for ourselves a single attempt of the most superficial kind. Warton's *History of Poetry* contains much that bears on our general learning ; but it leaves us about the accession of Elizabeth.

Far more has been accomplished in the history of particular departments of literature. In the general history of philosophy, omitting a few older writers, Brucker deserves to lead the way. There has been of late years some disposition to depreciate his laborious performance, as not sufficiently imbued with a metaphysical spirit, and as not rendering with clearness and truth the tenets of the philosophers whom he exhibits. But the Germany of 1744 was not the Germany of Kant and Fichte; and possibly Brucker may not have proved the worse historian for having known little of recent theories. The latter objection is more material; in some instances he seems to me not quite equal to his subject. But upon the whole he is of eminent usefulness; copious in his extracts, impartial and candid in his judgments.

In the next age after Brucker, the great fondness of the German learned both for historical and philosophical investigation produced more works of this class than I know by name, and many more than I have read. The most celebrated, perhaps, is that of Tennemann; but of which I only know the abridgment, translated into French by M. Victor Cousin, with the title *Manuel de l'Histoire de Philosophie*. Buhle, one of the society above mentioned, whose focus was at Göttingen, contributed his share to their scheme in a *History of Philosophy* from the revival of letters. This I have employed through the French translation in six volumes. Buhle, like Tennemann, has very evident obligations to Brucker; but his own erudition was extensive, and his philosophical acuteness not inconsiderable.

The history of poetry and eloquence, or fine writing, was published by Bouterwek, in twelve volumes octavo. Those parts which relate to his own country, and to Spain and Portugal, have been of more use to me than the rest. Many of my readers must be acquainted with the *Littérature du Midi*, by M. Sismondi; a work written in that

flowing and graceful style which distinguishes the author, and succeeding in all that it seeks to give,—a pleasing and popular, yet not superficial or unsatisfactory, account of the best authors in the southern languages. We have nothing historical as to our own poetry but the prolix volumes of Warton. They have obtained, in my opinion, full as much credit as they deserve: without depreciating a book in which so much may be found, and which has been so great a favourite with the literary part of the public, it may be observed that its errors as to fact, especially in names and dates, are extraordinarily frequent, and that the criticism, in points of taste, is not of a very superior kind.

Heeren undertook the history of classical literature,—a great desideratum, which no one had attempted to supply. But unfortunately he has only given an introduction, carrying us down to the close of the fourteenth century, and a history of the fifteenth. These are so good, that we must much lament the want of the rest; especially as I am aware of nothing to fill up the vacuity. Eichhorn, however, is here of considerable use.

In the history of mathematical science, I have had recourse chiefly to Montucla, and, as far as he conducts us, to Kästner, whose catalogue and analysis of mathematical works is far more complete, but his own observations less perspicuous and philosophical. Portal's History of Anatomy, and some other books, to which I have always referred, and which it might be tedious to enumerate, have enabled me to fill a few pages with what I could not be expected to give from any original research. But several branches of literature, using the word, as I generally do, in the most general sense for the knowledge imparted through books, are as yet deficient in any thing that approaches to a real history of their progress.

The materials of literary history must always be derived in great measure from biographical collections, those especially, which internix a certain portion of criticism

with mere facts. There are some, indeed, which are almost entirely of this description. Adrian Baillet, in his *Jugemens des Scavans*, published in 1685, endeavoured to collect the suffrages of former critics on the merits of all past authors. His design was only executed in a small part, and hardly extends beyond grammarians, translators, and poets; the latter but imperfectly. Baillet gives his quotations in French, and sometimes mingles enough of his own to raise him above a mere compiler, and to have drawn down the animosity of some contemporaries. Sir Thomas Pope Blount is a perfectly unambitious writer of the same class. His *Censura celebriorum autorum*, published in 1690, contains nothing of his own, except a few short dates of each author's life, but diligently brings together the testimonies of preceding critics. Blount omits no class, nor any age; his arrangement is nearly chronological, and leads the reader from the earliest records of literature to his own time. The polite writers of modern Europe, and the men of science, do not receive their full share of attention; but this volume, though not, I think, much in request at present, is a very convenient accession to any scholar's library.

Bayle's Dictionary, published in 1697, seems at first sight an inexhaustible magazine of literary history. Those who are conversant with it know that it frequently disappoints their curiosity; names of great eminence are sought in vain, or are very slightly treated; the reader is lost in episodic notes, perpetually frivolous, and disgusted with an author who turns away at every moment from what is truly interesting to some idle dispute of his own time, or some contemptible indecency. Yet the numerous quotations contained in Bayle, the miscellaneous copiousness of his erudition, as well as the good sense and acuteness he can always display when it is his inclination to do so, render his dictionary of great value, though I think chiefly to those who have made a tolerable progress in general literature.

The title of a later work by Père Nicéron, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres de la république des lettres, avec un catalogue raisonné de leurs ouvrages*, in forty-three volumes 12mo, published at Paris from 1727 to 1745, announces something rather different from what it contains. The number of "illustrious men" recorded by Nicéron is about 1600, chiefly of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The names, as may be anticipated, are frequently very insignificant; and, in return, not a few of real eminence, especially when protestant, and above all English, are overlooked, or erroneously mentioned. No kind of arrangement is observed; it is utterly impossible to conjecture in what volume of Nicéron any article will be discovered. A succinct biography, though fuller than the mere dates of Blount, is followed by short judgments on the author's works, and by a catalogue of them, far more copious, at least, than had been given by any preceding bibliographer. It is a work of much utility; but the more valuable parts have been transused into later publications.

The English Biographical Dictionary was first published in 1761. I speak of this edition with some regard, from its having been the companion of many youthful hours; but it is rather careless in its general execution. It is sometimes ascribed to Birch; but I suspect that Heathcote had more to do with it. After several successive enlargements, an edition of this dictionary was published in thirty-two volumes, from 1812 to 1817, by Alexander Chalmers, whose name it now commonly bears. Chalmers was a man of very slender powers, relatively to the magnitude of such a work; but his life had been passed in collecting small matters of fact, and he has added much of this kind to British biography. He inserts, beyond any one else, the most insignificant names, and quotes the most wretched authorities. But as the faults of excess, in such collections, are more pardonable than those of omis-

sion, we cannot deny the value of his Biographical Dictionary, especially as to our own country, which has not fared well at the hands of foreigners.

Coincident nearly in order of time with Chalmers, but more distinguished in merit, is the *Biographie Universelle*. The eminent names appended to a large proportion of the articles contained in its fifty-two volumes, are vouchers for the ability and erudition it displays. There is doubtless much inequality in the performance; and we are sometimes disappointed by a superficial notice, where we had a right to expect most. English literature, though more amply treated than had been usual on the Continent, and with the benefit of Chalmers's contemporaneous volumes, is still not fully appreciated: our chief theological writers, especially, are passed over almost in silence. There seems, on the other hand, a redundancy of modern French names; those, above all, who have, even obscurely and insignificantly, been connected with the history of the Revolution; a fault, if it be one, which is evidently gaining ground in the supplementary volumes. But I must speak respectfully of a work to which I owe so much, and without which, probably, I should never have undertaken the present.

I will not here characterise several works of more limited biography; among which are the *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova* of Antonio, the *Biographia Britannica*, the *Bibliothèque Française* of Goujet; still less is there time to enumerate particular lives, or those histories which relate to short periods, among the sources of literary knowledge. It will be presumed, and will appear by my references, that I have employed such of them as came within my reach. But I am sensible that, in the great multiplicity of books of this kind, and especially in their prodigious increase on the continent of late years, many have been overlooked from which I might have improved these volumes. The press is indeed so active, that no year passes without accessions to our knowledge, even historically considered,

upon some of the multifarious subjects which the present volumes embrace. An author who waits till all requisite materials are accumulated to his hands, is but watching the stream that will run on for ever; and though I am fully sensible that I could have much improved what is now offered to the public by keeping it back for a longer time, I should but then have had to lament the impossibility of exhausting my subject. ΕΠΟΙΕΙ, the modest phrase of the Grecian sculptors, but expresses the imperfection that attaches to every work of literary industry or of philosophical investigation. But I have other warnings to bind up my sheaves while I may,—my own advancing years, and the gathering in the heavens.

I have quoted, to my recollection, no passage which I have not seen in its own place; though I may possibly have transcribed in some instances, for the sake of convenience, from a secondary authority. Without censuring those who suppress the immediate source of their quotations, I may justly say that in nothing I have given to the public has it been practised by myself. But I have now and then inserted in the text characters of books that I have not read on the faith of my guides; and it may be the case that intimation of this has not been always given to the reader.

It is very likely that omissions, not, I trust, of great consequence, will be detected; I might in fact say that I am already aware of them; but perhaps these will be candidly ascribed to the numerous ramifications of the subject, and the necessity of writing in a different order from that in which the pages are printed. And I must add that some omissions have been intentional: an accumulation of petty facts, and especially of names to which little is attached, fatigues unprofitably the attention; and as this is very frequent in works that necessarily demand condensation, and cannot altogether be avoided, it was desirable to make some sacrifice in order to palliate the inconvenience. This will be found, among many other instances, in the account of

the Italian learned of the fifteenth century, where I might easily have doubled the enumeration, but with little satisfaction to the reader.

But, independently of such slighter omissions, it will appear that a good deal is wanting in these volumes, which some might expect in a history of literature. Such a history has often contained so large a proportion of biography, that a work in which it appears very scantily or hardly at all, may seem deficient in necessary information. It might be replied, that the limits to which I have confined myself, and beyond which it is not easy perhaps, in the present age, to obtain readers, would not admit of this extension; but I may add, that any biography of the authors of these centuries, which is not servilely compiled from a few known books of that class, must be far too immense an undertaking for one man, and besides its extent and difficulty, would have been particularly irksome to myself, from the waste of time, as I deem it, which an inquiry into trifling facts entails. I have more scruple about the omission of extracts from some of the poets and best writers in prose, without which they can be judged very unsatisfactorily; but in this also I have been influenced by an unwillingness to multiply my pages beyond a reasonable limit. But I have, in some instances, at least in the later periods, gone more largely into analyses of considerable works than has hitherto been usual. These are not designed to serve as complete abstracts, or to supersede, instead of exciting, the reader's industry; but I have felt that some books of traditional reputation are less fully known than they deserve.

Some departments of literature are passed over, or partially touched. Among the former are books relating to particular arts, as agriculture or painting, or to subjects of merely local interest, as those of English law. Among the latter is the great and extensive portion of every library, the historical. Unless where history has been written with

peculiar beauty of language, or philosophical spirit, I have generally omitted all mention of it; in our researches after truth of fact, the number of books that possess some value is exceedingly great, and would occupy a disproportionate space in such a general view of literature as the present. For a similar reason, I have not given its numerical share to theology.

It were an impertinence to anticipate, for the sake of obviating, the possible criticism of a public which has a right to judge, and for whose judgments I have had so much cause to be grateful, nor less so to dictate how it should read what it is not bound to read at all; but perhaps I may be allowed to say, that I do not wish this to be considered as a book of reference on particular topics, in which point of view it must often appear to disadvantage; and that, if it proves of any value, it will be as an entire and synoptical work.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE

IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

ERRATA.

- Page 32. note †, *for first six read first and sixth.*
 34. note, *for aulâ a read aulæa.*
 47. line 15. *for Gaimnar read Gaimar.*
 65. line 20. *for geistlich read geistig.*
 96. note *, line 7. *for Glossagraphorum read Glossographorum.*
 126. line 22. *for Polecraticon read Policratron.*
 146. note †, *for end of the fifteenth read first part of the sixteenth.*
 502. last line, *for 1526 read 1521.*
 543. line 2. *for actual read astral.*
 584. line 18. *for verse [second time] read sense.*

1. **ALTHOUGH** the subject of these volumes does not comprehend the literary history of Europe, anterior to the commencement of the fifteenth century, a period as nearly coinciding as can be expected in any arbitrary division of time, with what is usually denominated the revival of letters, it appears necessary to prefix such a general

CHAP.
I.

Retrospect
of learning
in middle
ages necessary.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LITERATURE OF EUROPE

IN THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND
SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GENERAL STATE OF LITERATURE IN THE
MIDDLE AGES TO THE END OF THE FOURTEENTH
CENTURY.

Loss of ancient Learning in the Fall of the Roman Empire — First Symptoms of its Revival — Improvement in the Twelfth Century — Universities and Scholastic Philosophy — Origin of Modern Languages — Early Poetry — Provençal, French, German, and Spanish — English Language and Literature — Increase of Elementary Knowledge — Invention of Paper — Roman Jurisprudence — Cultivation of Classical Literature — Its Decline after the Twelfth Century — Less visible in Italy — Petrarch.

1. **ALTHOUGH** the subject of these volumes does not comprehend the literary history of Europe, anterior to the commencement of the fifteenth century, a period as nearly coinciding as can be expected in any arbitrary division of time, with what is usually denominated the revival of letters, it appears necessary to prefix such a general

CHAP.
I.

Retrospect
of learning
in middle
ages necessary.

CHAP.
I.

retrospect of the state of knowledge for some preceding ages, as will illustrate its subsequent progress. In this, however, the reader is not to expect a regular history of mediæval literature, which would be nothing less than the extension of a scheme already, perhaps, too much beyond my powers of execution.*

Loss of
learning in
fall of
Roman
empire.

2. Every one is well aware, that the establishment of the barbarian nations on the ruins of the Roman empire in the West, was accompanied or followed by an almost universal loss of that learning which had been accumulated in the Latin and Greek languages, and which we call ancient or classical; a revolution long prepared by the decline of taste and knowledge for several preceding ages, but accelerated by public calamities in the fifth century with overwhelming rapidity. The last of the ancients, and one who forms a link between the classical period of literature and that of the Middle Ages, in which he was a favourite author, is Boethius, a man of fine genius, and interesting both from his character and his death. It is well known, that, after filling the dignities of Consul and Senator in the court of Theodoric, he fell a victim to the jealousy of a sovereign, from whose memory, in many respects glorious, the stain of that blood has never been effaced. The Consolation of Philosophy, the chief

Boethius—
his Con-
solation of
Philosophy.

* The subject of the following chapter has been already treated by me in another work, the History of Europe during the Middle Ages. I have not thought it necessary to repeat all that is there said: the reader, if he is acquainted with those volumes, may consider the ensuing pages partly as supplemental, and partly as correcting the former where they contain any thing inconsistent.

work of Boethius, was written in his prison. Few books are more striking from the circumstances of their production. Last of the classic writers, in style not impure, though displaying too lavishly that poetic exuberance which had distinguished the two or three preceding centuries, in elevation of sentiment equal to any of the philosophers, and mingling a Christian sanctity with their lessons, he speaks from his prison in the swan-like tones of dying eloquence. The philosophy that consoled him in bonds, was soon required in the sufferings of a cruel death. Quenched in his blood, the lamp he had trimmed with a skilful hand gave no more light; the language of Tully and Virgil soon ceased to be spoken; and many ages were to pass away, before learned diligence restored its purity, and the union of genius with imitation taught a few modern writers to surpass in eloquence the latinity of Boethius.

3. The downfall of learning and eloquence, after the death of Boethius in 524, was inconceivably rapid. His contemporary Cassiodorus, Isidore of Seville, and Martianus Capella, the earliest, but worst, of the three, by very indifferent compilations, and that encyclopedic method which Heeren observes to be an usual concomitant of declining literature, superseded the use of the great ancient writers, with whom, indeed, in the opinion of Meiners, they were themselves acquainted only through similar productions of the fourth and fifth centuries. Isidore speaks of the rhetorical works of Cicero and Quintilian as too

Rapid decline of learning in sixth century.

CHAP.
I.

diffuse to be read.* The authorities upon which they founded their scanty course of grammar, logic, and rhetoric were chiefly obscure writers, no longer extant. But themselves became the oracles of the succeeding period, wherein the trivium and quadrivium, a course of seven sciences, introduced in the sixth century, were taught from their jejune treatises.†

A portion
remains in
the church.

4. This state of general ignorance lasted, with no very sensible difference, on a superficial view, for about five centuries, during which every sort of knowledge was almost wholly confined to the ecclesiastical order. But among them, though instances of gross ignorance were exceedingly frequent, the necessity of preserving the Latin language, in which the Scriptures, the canons, and

* Meiners, *Vergleichung der sitten, &c. des mittelalters mit denen unsers Jahrhunderts*, 3 vols. Hanover, 1793. Vol. ii. p. 333. Eichhorn, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Cultur und Litteratur*, vol. ii. p. 29. Heeren, *Geschichte des studium der classischen Litteratur*. Gottingen, 1797. These three books, with the *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Brucker's *History of Philosophy*, Turner's and Henry's *Histories of England*, Muratori's 43d *Dissertation*, Tiraboschi, and some few others, who will appear in the notes, are my chief authorities for the dark ages. But none, in a very short compass, is equal to the third discourse of Fleury, in the 13th volume of the 12mo. edition of his *Ecclesiastical History*.

† The trivium contained grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the quadrivium, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy, as in these

two lines, framed to assist the memory: —

“GRAMM. loquitur; DIA. vera docet; RHET. verba colorat; MUS. canit; AR. numerat; GEO. ponderat; AST. colit astra.”

But most of these sciences, as such, were hardly taught at all. The arithmetic, for instance, of Cassiodorus or Capella is nothing but a few definitions mingled with superstitious absurdities about the virtues of certain numbers and figures. Meiners, ii. 339. Kästner, *Geschichte der Mathematik*, p. 8.

The arithmetic of Cassiodorus occupies little more than two folio pages, and does not contain one word of the common rules. The geometry is much the same; in two pages we have some definitions and axioms, but nothing farther. His logic is longer and better, extending to sixteen folio pages. The grammar is very short and trifling, the rhetoric the same.

other authorities of the church, and the regular liturgies, were written, and in which alone the correspondence of their well organised hierarchy could be conducted, kept flowing, in the worst seasons, a slender but living stream; and though, as has been observed, no great difference may appear, on a superficial view, between the seventh and eleventh centuries, it would easily be shown that, after the first prostration of learning, it was not long in giving signs of germinating afresh, and that a very slow and general improvement might be dated farther back than is generally believed.*

CHAP.
I.

5. Literature was assailed in its downfall by enemies from within as well as from without. A prepossession against secular learning had taken hold of those ecclesiastics who gave the tone to the rest; it was inculcated in the most extravagant degree by Gregory I., the founder, in a great measure, of the papal supremacy, and the chief authority in the dark ages†; it is even found in Alcuin,

Prejudices
of the clergy
against
profane
learning.

* M. Guizot confirms me in a conclusion to which I had previously come, that the seventh century is the *nadir* of the human mind in Europe, and that its movement in advance began before the end of the next, or, in other words, with Charlemagne. Hist. de la Civilisation en France, ii. 345. A notion probably is current in England, on the authority of the older writers, such as Cave or Robertson, that the greatest darkness was later; which is true as to England itself. It was in the seventh century that the barbarians were first tempted to enter the church, and obtain bishoprics, which had, in

the first age after their invasion, been reserved to Romans. Fleury, p. 18.

† Gregory has been often charged, on the authority of a passage in John of Salisbury, with having burned a library of heathen authors. He has been warmly defended by Tiraboschi, iii. 102. Even if the assertion of our countryman were more positive, he is of too late an age to demand much credit. Eichhorn, however, produces vehement expressions of Gregory's disregard for learning, and even for the observance of grammatical rules. ii. 443.

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I.

to whom so much is due, and it gave way very gradually in the revival of literature. In some of the monastic foundations, especially in that of Isidore, though himself a man of considerable learning, the perusal of heathen authors was prohibited. Fortunately Benedict, whose order became the most widely diffused, while he enjoined his brethren to read, copy, and collect books, was silent as to their nature, concluding, probably, that they would be wholly religious. This, in course of time, became the means of preserving and multiplying classical manuscripts.*

Their usefulness in preserving it.

6. If, however, the prejudices of the clergy stood in the way of what we more esteem than they did, the study of philological literature, it is never to be forgotten, that but for them the records of that very literature would have perished. If they had been less tenacious of their Latin liturgy, of the vulgate translation of Scripture, and of the authority of the fathers, it is very doubtful whether less superstition would have grown up, but we cannot hesitate to pronounce, that all grammatical learning would have been laid aside. The influence of the church upon learning, partly favourable, partly the reverse, forms the subject of Eichhorn's second volume; whose comprehensive views and well directed erudition, as well as his position in a great protestant university, give much weight to his testimony. But we should remember also, that it is, as it were, by striking a balance that we come to this result; and that, in many

* Heeren, p. 59. Eichhorn, ii. 11. 12. 40. 49. 50.

respects, the clergy counteracted that progress of improvement which, in others, may be ascribed to their exertions.

CHAP.
1.

7. It is not unjust to claim for these islands the honour of having first withstood the dominant ignorance, and even led the way in the restoration of knowledge. As early as the sixth century, a little glimmer of light was perceptible in the Irish monasteries: and in the next, when France and Italy had sunk in deeper ignorance, they stood, not quite where national prejudice has sometimes placed them, but certainly in a very respectable position.* That island both drew students from the Continent, and sent forth men of comparative eminence into its schools and churches. I do not find, however, that they contributed much to the advance of secular, and especially of grammatical learning. This is rather due to England, and to the happy influence of Theodore, our first primate, an Asiatic Greek by birth, sent hither by the pope in 668, through whom and his companion Adrian, some knowledge of the Latin and even Greek languages was propagated in the Anglo-Saxon church. The Venerable Bede, as he was afterwards styled, early in the eighth century, surpasses every other name of our ancient literary annals; and, though little more than a diligent compiler from older writers, may perhaps be reckoned superior to any man the world (so low had the east sunk like the west) then possessed. A desire of know-

First appearances
of reviving
learning in
Ireland and
England

* Eichhorn, ii. 176. 188. See also the first volume of Moore's History of Ireland, where the claims of his country are stated favourably, and with much learning and industry, but not with extravagant partiality.

CHAP.
I.

ledge grew up; the school of York, somewhat later, became respectable, before any liberal education had been established in France; and from this came Alcuin, a man fully equal to Bede in ability, though not, probably, in erudition.* By his assistance, and that of one or two Italians, Charlemagne laid in his vast dominions the foundations of learning, according to the standard of that age, which dispelled, at least for a time, some part of the gross ignorance wherein his empire had been enveloped.†

Few
schools be-
fore the age
of Charle-
magne,

8. The praise of having originally established schools belongs to some bishops and abbots of the sixth century. They came in place of the imperial schools overthrown by the barbarians.‡ In the downfall of that temporal dominion, a spiritual aristocracy was providentially raised up, to save from extinction the remains of learning, and religion itself. Some of those schools seem to have been preserved in the south of Italy, though merely, perhaps, for elementary instruction. But in France the barbarism of the later Merovingian period was so complete, that, before the reign of Charlemagne, all liberal studies had come to an end.§ Nor was Italy in a much better state at his

* Eichhorn, ii. 188. 207. 263. Hist. Litt. de la France, vols. iii. and iv. Henry's History of England, vol. iv. Turner's History of Anglo-Saxons. No one, however, has spoken so highly or so fully of Alcuin's merits as M. Guizot, in his *Histoire de la Civilisation en France*, vol. ii. p. 344—385.

† Besides the above authors, see, for the merits of Charlemagne as a restorer of letters, his Life by

Gaillard, and Andrés, *Origine, &c. della Letteratura*, i. 165.

‡ Eichhorn, ii. 5. 45. Guizot (vol. ii. p. 116.) gives a list of the episcopal schools in France before Charlemagne.

§ Ante ipsum Carolum regem in Gallia nullum fuerat studium liberalium artium. Monachus Engolimensis, apud Launoy de Scholis celebrioribus.

accession, though he called two or three scholars from thence to his literary councils: the libraries were destroyed, the schools chiefly closed; wherever the Lombard dominion extended, illiteracy was its companion.*

9. The cathedral and conventual schools, created or restored by Charlemagne, became the means of preserving that small portion of learning which continued to exist. They flourished most, having had time to produce their fruits, under his successors Louis the Debonair, Lothaire, and Charles the Bald.† It was, doubtless, a fortunate circumstance, that the revolution of language had now gone far enough to render Latin unintelligible without grammatical instruction. Alcuin and others who, like him, endeavoured to keep ignorance out of the church, were anxious, we are told, to restore orthography; or, in other words, to prevent the written Latin from following the corruptions of speech. They brought back, also, some knowledge of better classical authors than had been in use. Alcuin's own poems could at least not have been written by one unacquainted with Virgil‡: the

Beneficial effects of those establishments by him.

* Tiraboschi. Eichhorn. Heeren.

† The reader may find more of the history of these schools in a little treatise by Launoy, *De Scholis celebrioribus a Car. Mag. et post Car. Mag. instauratis*; also in *Hist. Litt. de la France*, vols. iii. and iv.; Crevier, *Hist. de l'Université de Paris*, vol. i.; Brucker's *Hist. Phil.* iii.; Muratori, *Dissert.* xliii.; Tiraboschi, iii. 158.; Eichhorn, 261. 295.; Heeren, and Fleury.

‡ A poem by Alcuin, *De Pon-*

tificibus Ecclesiæ Eboracensis, is published in Gale's xv. *Scriptores*, vol. iii. Henry quotes a passage from this, describing the books at York, in which we read this line—

Acer Aristoteles, rhetor atque Tullius ingens.

Such a verse could not have come from Alcuin; though he errs in the quantity of syllables, where memory alone could set him right, he was not ignorant of common rules. It is found in Gale:

Rhetor quoque Tullius ingens.

CHAP.
I.

faults are numerous, but the style is not always inelegant; and from this time, though quotations from the Latin poets, especially Ovid and Virgil, and sometimes from Cicero, are not very frequent, they occur sufficiently to show that manuscripts had been brought to this side of the Alps. They were, however, very rare: Italy was still, as might be expected, the chief depository of ancient writings; and Gerbert speaks of the facility of obtaining them in that country.*

The tenth century more progressive than usually supposed.

10. The tenth century used to be reckoned by mediæval historians the darkest part of this intellectual night. It was the iron age, which they vie with one another in describing as lost in the most consummate ignorance. This, however, is much rather applicable to Italy and England, than to France and Germany. The former were both in a deplorable state of barbarism. And there are, doubtless, abundant proofs of ignorance in every part of Europe. But, compared with the seventh and eighth centuries, the tenth was an age of illumination in France. And Meiners, who judged the middle ages somewhat, perhaps, too severely, but with a penetrating and comprehensive observation, of which there had been few instances, has gone so far as to say, that "in no age, perhaps, did Germany possess more learned and virtuous churchmen of the episcopal order, than in the latter half of the tenth, and beginning of the eleventh century."† Eichhorn points out indications of a more

* *Nosti quot scriptores in urbibus aut in agris Italiæ passim habeantur.* Gerbert. Epist. 130. apud Heeren, p. 166.

† *Vergleichung der sitten*, ii.

364. The eleventh century he holds far more advanced in learning than the sixth. Books were read in the later which no one looked at in the earlier. P. 399.

extensive acquaintance with ancient writers in several French and German ecclesiastics of this period.* In the eleventh century, this continued to increase; and, towards its close, we find more vigorous and extensive attempts at throwing off the yoke of barbarous ignorance, and either retrieving what had been lost of ancient learning, or supplying its place by the original powers of the mind.

CHAP.
I.

11. It is the most striking circumstance in the literary annals of the dark ages, that they seem to us still more deficient in native, than in acquired ability. The mere ignorance of letters has sometimes been a little exaggerated, and admits of certain qualifications; but a tameness and mediocrity, a servile habit of merely compiling from others, runs through the writers of these centuries. It is not only that much was lost, but that there was nothing to compensate for it; nothing of original genius in the province of imagination; and but two extraordinary men, Scotus Erigena and Gerbert, may be said to stand out from the crowd in literature and philosophy. It must be added, as to the former, that his writings contain, at least in such extracts as I have seen, unintelligible rhapsodies of mysticism, in which, perhaps, he should not even have the credit of originality. Eichhorn, however, bestows great praise on Scotus; and the modern historians of philosophy treat him with respect.†

Want of
genius in
the dark
ages.

* Allg. Gesch. ii. 335. 398.

† Extracts from John Scotus Erigena will be found in Brucker, Hist. Philosophiæ, vol. iii. p. 619;

in Meiners, ii. 373.; or more fully, in Turner's History of England, vol. i. 447., and Guizot, Hist. de la Civilisation en France, iii. 137.

CHAP.
I.Prevalence
of bad
taste.

12. It would be a strange hypothesis, that no man endowed with superior gifts of nature lived in so many ages. Though the pauses of her fertility in these high endowments are more considerable, I am disposed to think, than any previous calculation of probabilities would lead us to anticipate, we could not embrace so extreme a paradox. Of military skill, indeed, and civil prudence we are not now speaking. But, though no man appeared of genius sufficient to burst the fetters imposed by ignorance and bad taste, some there must have been, who, in a happier condition of literature, would have been its legitimate pride. We perceive, therefore, in the deficiencies of these writers, the effect which an oblivion of good models, and the prevalence of a false standard of merit, may produce in repressing the natural vigour of the mind. Their style, where they aim at eloquence, is inflated and redundant, formed upon the model of the later fathers, whom they chiefly read; a feeble imitation of that vicious rhetoric which had long overspread the latinity of the empire.*

178. The reader may consult also Buhle, Tennemann, and the article on Thomas Aquinas in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, ascribed to Dr. Hampden. But, perhaps, Mr. Turner is the only one of them who has seen, or at least read, the metaphysical treatise of John Scotus, entitled *De Divisione Naturæ*, in which alone we find his philosophy. It is very rare out of England.

* Fleury, l. xlv. § 19., and *Troisième Discours* (in vol. xiii.), p. 6. Turner's *History of England*, iv. 137., and *History of*

Anglo-Saxons, iil. 403. It is sufficient to look at any extracts from these writers of the dark ages to see the justice of this censure. Fleury, at the conclusion of his excellent third discourse, justly and candidly apologizes for these five ages, as not wholly destitute of learning, and far less of virtue. They have been, he says, outrageously depreciated by the humanists of the sixteenth century, who thought good Latin superior to every thing else; and by protestant writers, who laid the corruptions of the church on its

CHAP.
I.Deficiency
of poetical
talent.

13. It might naturally be asked, whether fancy and feeling were extinct among the people, though a false taste might reign in the cloister. Yet it is here that we find the most remarkable deficiency, and could appeal scarce to the vaguest tradition, or the most doubtful fragment, in witness of any poetical talent worthy of notice, except a very little in the Teutonic languages. The Anglo-Saxon poetry has occasionally a wild spirit, rather impressive, though it is often turgid and always rude. The Scandinavian, such as the well-known

ignorance. Yet there is an opposite extreme into which those who are disgusted with the commonplaces of superficial writers sometimes run; an estimation of men by their *relative* superiority above their own times, so as to forget their position in comparison with a fixed standard.

An eminent living writer, who has carried the philosophy of history, perhaps, as far as any other, has lately endeavoured, at considerable length, to vindicate in some measure the intellectual character of this period. (Guizot, vol. ii. p. 123—224.) It is with reluctance that I ever differ from M. Guizot; but the passages adduced by him, (especially if we exclude those of the fifth century, the poems of Avitus, and the homilies of Cæsar, do not appear adequate to redeem the age by any signs of genius they display. It must always be a question of degree; for no one is absurd enough to deny the existence of a relative superiority of talent, or the power of expressing moral emotions, as well as relating facts, with some warmth and energy. The legends of saints, an extensive though quite neglect-

ed portion of the literature of the dark ages, to which M. Guizot has had the merit of directing our attention, may probably contain many passages, like those he has quoted, which will be read with interest; and it is no more than justice, that he has given them in French, rather than in that half-barbarous Latin, which, though not essential to the author's mind, never fails, like an unbecoming dress, to show the gifts of nature at a disadvantage. But the questions still recur: Is this in itself excellent? Would it indicate, wherever we should meet with it, powers of a high order? Do we not make a tacit allowance in reading it, and that very largely, for the mean condition in which we know the human mind to have been placed at the period? Does it instruct us, or give us pleasure?

In what M. Guizot has said of the moral influence of these legends, in harmonising a lawless barbarian race (p. 157.), I should be sorry not to concur: it is a striking instance of that candid and catholic spirit with which he has always treated the mediæval church.

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I.

song of Regner Lodbrog, if that be as old as the period before us, which is now denied, displays a still more poetical character. Some of the earliest German poetry, the song on the victory of Louis III. over the Normans in 883, and, still more, the poem in praise of Hanno, archbishop of Cologne, who died in 1075, are warmly extolled by Herder and Bouterwek.* In the Latin verse of these centuries, we find, at best, a few lines among many, which show the author to have caught something of a classical style: the far greater portion is very bad.†

Imperfect
state of lan-
guage may
account for
this.

14. The very imperfect state of language, as an instrument of refined thought, in the transition of Latin to the French, Castilian, and Italian tongues, seems the best means of accounting in any satisfactory manner for this stagnation of the poetical faculties. The delicacy that distinguishes in words the shades of sentiment, the grace that

* Herder, *Zerstreute Blätter*, vol. v. p. 169. 184. Heinsius, *Lehrbuch der Deutschen Sprachwissenschaft*, iv. 29. Bouterwek, *Geschichte der Poesie und Beredsamkeit*, vol. ix. p. 78. 82. The author is unknown; aber dem unbekannten sichert sein werk die unsterblichkeit, says the latter critic. One might raise a question as to the capacity of an anonymous author to possess immortal fame. Nothing equal to this poem, he says, occurs in the earlier German poetry: it is an outpouring of genius, not without faults, but full of power and feeling: the dialect is still Frankish, but approaches to Swabian. Herder calls it 'a truly Pindaric song.' He has given large extracts from it in the

volume above quoted, which glows with his own fine sense of beauty.

† Tiraboschi supposes Latin versifiers to have been common in Italy. *Le Città al pari che le campagne risonavan di versi.* iii. 207

The specimens he afterwards produces, p. 219., are miserable. Hroswitha, abbess of Gandersheim, has, perhaps, the greatest reputation among these Latin poets. She wrote, in the tenth century, sacred comedies in imitation of Terence, which I have not seen, and other poetry which I saw many years since, and thought very bad. Alcuin has now and then a Virgilian cadence.

brings them to the soul of the reader with the charm of novelty united to clearness, could not be attainable in a colloquial jargon, the offspring of ignorance, and indeterminate possibly in its forms, which those who possessed any superiority of education would endeavour to avoid. We shall soon have occasion to advert again to this subject.

15. At the beginning of the twelfth century, we enter upon a new division in the literary history of Europe. From this time we may deduce a line of men, conspicuous, according to the standard of their times, in different walks of intellectual pursuit, and the commencement of an interesting period, the later Middle Ages; in which, though ignorance was very far from being cleared away, the natural powers of the mind were developed in considerable activity. We shall point out separately the most important circumstances of this progress; not all of them concurrent in efficacy with each other, for they were sometimes opposed, but all tending to arouse Europe from indolence, and to fix its attention on literature. These are, 1st. The institution of universities, and the methods pursued in them: 2d. The cultivation of the modern languages, followed by the multiplication of books, and the extension of the art of writing: 3d. The investigation of the Roman law: And lastly, the return to the study of the Latin language in its ancient models of purity. We shall thus come down to the fifteenth century, and judge better of what is meant by the revival of letters, when we apprehend with more exactness their previous condition.

Improve-
ment at
beginning
of twelfth
century.

Leading
circum-
stances in
progress of
learning.

CHAP.

I.

Origin of
the univer-
sity of
Paris.

16. Among the Carlovingian schools it is doubtful whether we can reckon one at Paris; and though there are some traces of public instruction in that city about the end of the ninth century, it is not certain that we can assume it to be more ancient. For two hundred years more, indeed, it can only be said, that some persons appear to have come to Paris for the purposes of study.* The commencement of this famous university, like that of Oxford, has no record. But it owes its first reputation to the sudden spread of what is usually called the scholastic philosophy.

Modes of
treating the
science of
theology.

17. There had been hitherto two methods of treating theological subjects: one that of the fathers, who built them on scripture, illustrated and interpreted by their own ingenuity, and in some measure also on the traditions and decisions of the church; the other, which is said by the Benedictines of St. Maur to have grown up about the eighth century (though Mosheim seems to refer it to the sixth), using the fathers themselves, that is, the chief writers of the first six hundred years, who appear now to have acquired that distinctive title of honour, as authority, conjointly with scripture and ecclesiastical determinations, by means of extracts or compends of their writings. Hence about this time we find more frequent instances of a practice which had begun before — that of publishing *Loci communes* or *Catenæ patrum*, being only digested extracts from the authorities under

* Crevier, i. 13—75.

systematic heads.* Both these methods were usually called positive theology.

CHAP.
I.

Scholastic
philosophy;
its origin.

18. The scholastic theology was a third method ; it was in its general principle, an alliance between faith and reason ; an endeavour to arrange the orthodox system of the church, such as authority had made it, according to the rules and methods of the Aristotelian dialectics, and sometimes upon premises supplied by metaphysical reasoning. Lanfranc and Anselm made much use of this method in the controversy with Berenger as to transubstantiation ; though they did not carry it so far as their successors in the next century.† The scholastic philosophy seems chiefly to be distinguished from this theology by a larger infusion of metaphysical reasoning, or by its occasional inquiries into subjects not immediately related to revealed articles of faith.‡ The origin of this philosophy, fixed by

* Fleury, 3me discours, p. 48. (Hist. Ecclés. vol. xiii. 12mo ed.) Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 147. Mosheim, in Cent. vi. et post. Muratori, Antichità Italiane, dissert. xliii. p. 610. In this dissertation, it may be observed by the way, Muratori gives the important fragment of Caius, a Roman presbyter before the end of the second century, on the canon of the New Testament, which has not been quoted, as far as I know, by any English writer, nor, which is more remarkable, by Michaelis. It will be found in Eichhorn, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, iv. 35. The Latinity is very indifferent for the second century ; yet it cannot be much later, and may possibly be suspected of being a translation from a Greek original.

Upon this great change in the

theology of the church, which consisted principally in establishing the authority of the fathers, the reader may see M. Guizot, Hist. de la Civilisation, iii. 121. There seem to be but two causes for this : the one, a consciousness of ignorance and inferiority to men of so much talent as Augustin and a few others ; the other, a constantly growing jealousy of the free exercise of reason, and a determination to keep up unity of doctrine.

† Hist. Litt. de la France, ubi suprâ. Tennemann, Manuel de l'Hist. de la Philosophie, i. 332. Crevier, i. 100. Andrés, ii. 15.

‡ A Jesuit of the sixteenth century thus shortly and clearly distinguishes the positive from the scholastic, and both from natural or metaphysical theology. At nos

CHAP.
I.

Roscelin.

Buhle and Tennemann in the ninth century, or the age of Scotus Erigena, has been brought down by Tiedemann, Meiners, and Hampden*, so low as the thirteenth. But Roscelin of Compiègne, a little before 1100, may be accounted so far the founder of the schoolmen that the great celebrity of their disputations, and the rapid increase of students, is to be traced to the influence of his theories, though we have no proof that he ever taught at Paris. Roscelin also, having been the first to re-

theologiam scholasticam dicimus, quæ certiori methodo et rationibus imprimis ex divina scriptura, ac traditionibus seu decretis patrum in conciliis definitis veritatem eruit, ac discutiendo comprobatur. Quod cum in scholis præcipue argumentando comparetur, id nomen sortita est. Quamobrem differt a positiva theologia, non re sed modo, quemadmodum item alia ratione non est eadem cum naturali theologia, quo nomine philosophi metaphysicæ nominarunt. Positiva igitur non ita res disputandas proponit, sed pæne sententiam ratam et firmam ponit, præcipue in pietatem incumbens. Versatur autem et ipsa in explicatione Scripturæ sacræ, traditionum, conciliorum et sanctorum patrum. Naturalis porro theologia Dei naturam per naturæ argumenta et rationes inquit, cum supernaturalis, quam scholasticam dicimus, Dei ejusdem naturam, vim, proprietates, cæterasque res divinas per ea principia vestigat, quæ sunt hominibus revelata divinitas. Possevin, *Bibliotheca Selecta*, l. 3. c. i.

Both positive and scholastic theology were much indebted to Peter Lombard, whose *Liber Sententiarum* is a digest of propositions

extracted from the fathers, with no attempt to reconcile them. It was therefore a prodigious magazine of arms for disputation.

* The first of these, according to Tennemann, begins the list of schoolmen with Hales; the two latter agree in conferring that honour on Albertus Magnus. Brucker inclines to Roscelin, and has been followed by others. It may be added, that Tennemann divides the scholastic philosophy into four periods, which Roscelin, Hales, Ockham, and the sixteenth century terminate; and Buhle into three, ending with Roscelin, Albertus Magnus, and the sixteenth century. It is evident, however, that, by beginning the scholastic series with Roscelin, we exclude Lanfranc and even Anselm; the latter of whom was certainly a deep metaphysician; since to him we owe the subtle argument for the existence of a Deity, which Des Cartes afterwards revived. Buhle, 679. This argument was answered at the time by one Gaunelo; so that metaphysical reasonings were not unknown in the eleventh century. Tennemann, 344.

vive the famous question as to the reality of universal ideas, marks, on every hypothesis, a new era in the history of that philosophy. The principle of the schoolmen in their investigations was the expanding, developing, and if possible illustrating and clearing from objection, the doctrines of natural and revealed religion in a dialectical method and by dint of the subtlest reasoning. The questions which we deem altogether metaphysical, such as that concerning universal ideas, became theological in their hands.*

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I.

19. Next in order of time to Roscelin came William of Champeaux, who opened a school of logic at Paris in 1109; and the university can only deduce the regular succession of its teachers from that time.† But his reputation was soon eclipsed, and his hearers drawn away by a more potent magician, Peter Abelard, who taught in the schools of Paris in the second decad of the twelfth century. Wherever Abelard retired, his fame and his disciples followed him; in the solitary walls of the Paraclete, as in the thronged streets

Progress of
scholas-
ticism; in-
crease of
university
of Paris.

* Brucker, though he contains some useful extracts, and tolerable general views, was not well versed in the scholastic writers. Meiners (in his Comparison of the Middle Ages) is rather superficial as to their philosophy, but presents a lively picture of the schoolmen in relation to literature and manners. He has also, in the Transactions of the Gottingen Academy, vol. xii. pp. 26—47., given a succinct, but valuable, sketch of the Nominalist and Realist Controversy. Tennemann, with whose Manuel de la Philosophie alone I am conversant, is supposed to have gone

very deeply into the subject in his larger history of philosophy. Buhle appears superficial. Dr. Hampden, in his Life of Thomas Aquinas, and view of the scholastic philosophy, published in the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, has the merit of having been the only Englishman, past or present, so far as I know, since the revival of letters, who has penetrated far into the wilderness of scholasticism. Mr. Sharon Turner has given some extracts in the fourth volume of his History of England.

† Crevier, i. 3.

CHAP.
I

of the capital.* And the impulse given was so powerful, the fascination of a science which now appears arid and unproductive was so intense, that from this time for many generations it continued to engage the most intelligent and active minds. Paris, about the middle of the twelfth century, in the words of the Benedictines of St. Maur, to whom we owe the *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, was another Athens; the number of students (hyperbolically speaking, as we must presume) exceeding that of the citizens. This influx of scholars induced Philip Augustus, some time afterwards, to enlarge the boundaries of the city; and this again brought a fresh harvest of students, for whom, in the former limits, it had been difficult to find lodgings. Paris was called, as Rome had been, the country of all the inhabitants of the world, and we may add, as, for very different reasons, it still claims to be.†

Univer-
sities
founded.

Oxford.

20. Colleges with endowments for poor scholars were founded in the beginning of the thirteenth century, or even before, at Paris and Bologna, as they were afterwards at Oxford and Cambridge, by munificent patrons of letters; charters incorporating the graduates and students collectively under the name of universities were granted by sovereigns, with privileges perhaps too extensive, but such as indicated the dignity of learning, and the countenance it received.‡ It ought, however, to be

* Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. xii. Brucker, iii. 750.

† Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 78. Crevier, i. 274.

‡ Fleury, xvii. 13. 17. Crevier,

Tiraboschi, &c. A University, universitas doctorum et scholarium, was so called either from its incorporation, or from its professing to teach all subjects, as some

remembered, that these foundations were not the cause, but the effect of that increasing thirst for knowledge, or the semblance of knowledge, which had anticipated the encouragement of the great. The schools of Charlemagne were designed to lay the basis of a learned education, for which there was at that time no sufficient desire.* But in the twelfth century, the impetuosity with which men rushed to that source of what they deemed wisdom, the great university of Paris, did not depend upon academical privileges or eleemosynary stipends, which came afterwards, though these were undoubtedly very effectual in keeping it up. The university created patrons, and was not created by them. And this may be said also of Oxford and Cambridge in their incorporate character, whatever the former may have owed, if in fact it owed any thing, to the prophetic munificence of Alfred. Oxford was a school of great resort in the reign of Henry II., though its first charter was only granted by Henry III. Its earlier history is but obscure, and depends chiefly on a suspicious passage in Ingulfus, against which we must set the absolute silence of other writers.† It became in the thir-

have thought. Meiners, ii. 405. Fleury, xvii. 15. This excellent discourse of Fleury, the fifth, relates to the ecclesiastical literature of the later middle ages.

* These schools, established by the Carolingian princes in convents and cathedrals, declined, as it was natural to expect, with the rise of the universities. Meiners, ii. 406. These of Paris, Oxford, and Bologna contained many thousand students.

† Giraldus Cambrensis, about 1180, seems the first unequivocal witness to the resort of students to Oxford, as an established seat of instruction. But it is certain that Vacarius read there on the civil law in 1149, which affords a presumption that it was already assuming the character of a university. John of Salisbury, I think, does not mention it. In a former work, I gave more credence to its foundation by Alfred than I am

CHAP. I. teenth century second only to Paris in the multitude of its students, and the celebrity of its scholastic disputations. England indeed, and especially through Oxford, could show more names of the first class in this line than any other country.*

Collegiate
foundations
not derived
from the
Saracens.

21. Andrés is inclined to derive the institution of collegiate foundations in universities from the Saracens. He finds no trace of these among the ancients; while in several cities of Spain, as Cordova, Granada, Malaga, colleges for learned education both existed and obtained great renown. These were sometimes unconnected with each other, though in the same city, nor had they, of course, those privileges which were conferred in Christendom. They were therefore more like ordinary schools or gymnasia than universities; and it is difficult to perceive that they suggested any thing peculiarly characteristic of the latter institutions, which are much more reasonably consi-

now inclined to do. Bologna, as well as Paris, was full of English students about 1200. Meiners, ii. 428.

* Wood expatiates on what he thought the glorious age of the university. "What university I pray can produce an invincible Hales, an admirable Bacon, an excellent well-grounded Middleton, a subtle Scotus, an approved Burley, a resolute Baconthorpe, a singular Ockham, a solid and industrious Holcot, and a profound Bradwardin? all which persons flourished within the compass of one century. I doubt that neither Paris, Bologna, or Rome, that grand mistress of the Christian

world, or any place else, can do what the renowned Bellosite (Oxford) hath done. And without doubt all impartial men may receive it for an undeniable truth, that the most subtle arguing in school divinity did take its beginning in England and from Englishmen; and that also from thence it went to Paris, and other parts of France, and at length into Italy, Spain, and other nations, as is by one observed. So that though Italy boasteth that Britain takes her Christianity first from Rome, England may truly maintain that from her (immediately by France) Italy first received her school divinity." Vol. i. p. 159. A. D. 1168.

dered as the development of a native germ, planted by a few generous men, above all by Charlemagne, in that inclement season which was passing away.*

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22. The institution of the Mendicant orders of friars, soon after the beginning of the thirteenth century, caused a fresh accession, in enormous numbers, to the ecclesiastical state, and gave encouragement to the scholastic philosophy. Less acquainted, generally, with grammatical literature than the Benedictine monks, less accustomed to collect and transcribe books, the disciples of Francis and Dominic betook themselves to disputation, and found a substitute for learning in their own ingenuity and expertness.† The greatest of the schoolmen were the Dominican Thomas Aquinas, and the Franciscan Duns Scotus. They were founders of rival sects, which wrangled with each other for two or three centuries. But the authority of their writings, which were incredibly voluminous, especially those of the former‡, impeded, in some measure, the growth of new men; and we find, after the middle of the fourteenth century, a diminution of eminent names in the series of the schoolmen, the last of whom, that is much remembered in modern times, was William Ockham.§ He revived the sect of the Nominal-

Scholastic
philosophy
promoted
by Mendicant
Friars.

* Andrés, ii. 129.

† Meiners, ii. 615. 629.

‡ The works of Thomas Aquinas are published in seventeen volumes folio; Rome, 1570: those of Duns Scotus in twelve; Lyon, 1639. It is presumed that much was taken down from their oral lectures; some part of these volumes is of doubtful authenticity. Meiners, ii. 718. Biogr. Univ.

§ "In them (Scotus and Ockham), and in the later schoolmen generally, down to the period of the reformation, there is more of the parade of logic, a more formal examination of arguments, a more burthensome importunity of syllogizing, with less of the philosophical power of arrangement and distribution of the subject discussed. The dryness again irre-

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ists, formerly instituted by Roscelin, and, with some important variances of opinion, brought into credit by Abelard, but afterwards overpowered by the great weight of leading schoolmen on the opposite side,—that of the Realists. The disciples of Ockham, as well as himself, being politically connected with the party in Germany unfavourable to the high pretensions of the Court of Rome, though they became very numerous in the universities, passed for innovators in ecclesiastical, as well as philosophical principles. Nominalism itself indeed was reckoned by the adverse sect cognate to heresy. No decline however seems to have been as yet perceptible in the spirit of disputation, which probably, at the end of the fourteenth century, went on as eagerly at Paris, Oxford, and Salamanca, the great scenes of that warfare, as before; and which, in that age, gained much ground in Germany, through the establishment of several universities.

Character
of this phi-
losophy.

23. Tennemann has fairly stated the good and bad of the scholastic philosophy. It gave rise

parable from the scholastic method is carried to excess in the later writers, and perspicuity of style is altogether neglected." *Encyclopædia Metropol.* part xxxvii. p. 805.

The introduction of this excess of logical subtlety, carried to the most trifling sophistry, is ascribed by Meiners to Petrus Hispanus, afterwards Pope John XXI., who died in 1271, ii. 705. Several curious specimens of scholastic folly are given by him in this place. They brought a discredit upon the name, which has ad-

hered to it, and involved men of fine genius, such as Aquinas himself, in the common reproach.

The barbarism of style, which amounted almost to a new language, became more intolerable in Scotus and his followers than it had been in the older schoolmen. Meiners, 722. It may be alleged, in excuse of this, that words are meant to express precise ideas; and that it was as impossible to write metaphysics in good Latin, as the modern naturalists have found it to describe plants and animals.

to a great display of address, subtlety, and sagacity in the explanation and distinction of abstract ideas, but at the same time to many trifling and minute speculations, to a contempt of positive and particular knowledge, and to much unnecessary refinement.* Fleury well observes, that the dry technical style of the schoolmen, affecting a geometrical method and closeness, is in fact more prolix and tedious, than one more natural, from its formality in multiplying objections and answers.† And as their reasonings commonly rest on disputable postulates, the accuracy they affect is of no sort of value. But their chief offences were the interposing obstacles to the revival of polite literature, and to the free expansion of the mind. Italy was the land where the schoolmen had least influence; many of the Italians who had a turn for those discussions repaired to Paris‡, and it was accordingly from Italy that the light of philological learning spread over Europe. Public schools of theology were not opened in Italy till after 1360.§ Yet we find the disciples of Averroes numerous in the university of Padua about that time.

It prevails
least in
Italy.

24. II. The universities were chiefly employed upon this scholastic theology and metaphysics, with the exception of Bologna, which dedicated its attention to the civil law, and of Montpellier, already famous as a school of medicine. The laity in general might have remained in as gross barbarity as before, while topics so removed from common utility

Literature
in modern
languages.

* Manuel de la Philosophie, i.
337. Eichhorn, ii. 396.

† Tiraboschi, v. 115.

‡ Id. 137. 160. De Sade, Vie de

† See 5me discours, xvii. 30—
50. Petrarque, iii. 757.

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were treated in an unknown tongue. We must therefore look to the rise of a truly native literature in the several languages of western Europe, as a more essential cause of its intellectual improvement; and this will render it necessary to give a sketch of the origin and early progress of those languages and that new literature.

Origin of
the French,
Spanish,
and Italian
languages.

25. No one can require to be informed, that the Italian, Spanish, and French languages are the principal of many dialects deviating from each other in the gradual corruption of the Latin, once universally spoken by the subjects of Rome in her western provinces. They have undergone this process of change in various degrees, but always from similar causes; partly from the retention of barbarous words belonging to their aboriginal languages, or the introduction of others through the settlement of the northern nations in the empire; but in a far greater proportion, from ignorance of grammatical rules, or from vicious pronunciation and orthography. It has been the labour of many distinguished writers to trace the source and channels of these streams which have supplied both the literature and the common speech of the south of Europe; and perhaps not much will be hereafter added to researches which, in the scarcity of extant documents, can never be minutely successful. Du Cange, who led the way in the admirable preface to his Glossary; Le Bœuf, and Bonamy, in several memoirs among the transactions of the Academy of Inscriptions about the middle of the last century; Muratori, in his 32d, 33d, and 40th dissertation on Italian antiquities; and, with

more copious evidence and successful industry than any other, M. Raynouard, in the first and sixth volume of his *Choix des Poesies des Troubadours*, have collected as full a history of the formation of these languages as we could justly require.

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26. The pure Latin language, as we read it in the best ancient authors, possesses a complicated syntax, and many elliptical modes of expression which give vigour and elegance to style, but are not likely to be readily caught by the people. If, however the citizens of Rome had spoken it with entire purity, it is to be remembered, that Latin, in the later times of the republic, or under the empire, was not like the Greek of Athens, or the Tuscan of Florence, the idiom of a single city, but a language spread over countries in which it was not originally vernacular, and imposed by conquest upon many parts of Italy, as it was afterwards upon Spain and Gaul. Thus we find even early proofs, that solecisms of grammar, as well as barbarous phrases, or words unauthorised by use of polite writers, were very common in Rome itself; and in every succeeding generation, for the first centuries after the Christian æra, these became more frequent and inevitable. A vulgar Roman dialect, called *quotidianus* by Quintilian, *pedestris* by Vegetius, *usualis* by Sidonius, is recognised as distinguishable from the pure Latinity to which we give the name of classical. But the more ordinary appellation of this inferior Latin was *rusticus*; it was the country language or *patois*, corrupted in every manner, and from the popular want of education, incapable of being re-

Corruption
of collo-
quial Latin
in the
lower
empire.

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stored, because it was not perceived to be erroneous.* Whatever may have been the case before the fall of the Western Empire, we have reason to believe that in the sixth century the colloquial Latin had undergone, at least in France, a considerable change even with the superior class of ecclesiastics. Gregory of Tours confesses that he was habitually falling into that sort of error, the misplacing inflexions and prepositions, which constituted the chief original difference of the rustic tongue from pure Latinity. In the opinion indeed of Raynouard, if we take his expressions in their natural meaning, the Romance language, or that which afterwards was generally called Provençal, is as old as the establishment of the Franks in Gaul. But this is perhaps not reconcilable with the proofs we have of a longer continuance of Latin. In Italy it seems probable that the change advanced more slowly. Gregory the Great,

* Du Cange, preface, pp. 13. 29. Rusticum igitur sermonem non humiliorem paulo duntaxat, et qui sublimi opponitur, appellabant; sed eum etiam, qui magis reperet, barbarismis solæcismisque scateret, quam apposite Sidonius squamam sermonis Celtici, &c. vocat. —Rusticum, qui nullis vel grammaticæ vel orthographiæ legibus astringitur. This is nearly a definition of the early Romance language; it was Latin without grammar or orthography.

The squama sermonis Celtici, mentioned by Sidonius, has led Gray, in his valuable remarks on rhyme, vol. ii. p. 53., as it has some others, into the erroneous notion that a real Celtic dialect, such as Cæsar found in Gaul, was still spoken. But this is incompatible

with the known history of the French language; and Sidonius is one of those loose declamatory writers, whose words are never to be construed in their proper meaning; the common fault of Latin authors from the third century. Celticus sermo was the patois of Gaul, which, having once been Gallia Celtica, he still called such. That a few proper names, or similar words, in French are Celtic, is well known.

Quintilian has said, that a vicious orthography must bring on a vicious pronunciation. Quod male scribitur, male etiam dici necesse est. But the converse of this is still more true, and was in fact the great cause of giving the new Romance language its *visible* form.

however, who has been reckoned as inveterate an enemy of learning as ever lived, speaks with superlative contempt of a regard to grammatical purity in writing. It was a crime in his eyes for a clergyman to teach grammar; yet the number of laymen who were competent or willing to do so had become very small.

27. It may render this more clear, if we mention a few of the growing corruptions, which have in fact transformed the Latin into French and the sister tongues. —The prepositions were used with no regard to the proper inflexions of nouns and verbs. These were known so inaccurately, and so constantly put one for another, that it was necessary to have recourse to prepositions instead of them. Thus *de* and *ad* were made to express the genitive and dative cases, which is common in charters from the sixth to the tenth century. It is a real fault in the Latin language, that it wants both the definite and indefinite article: *ille* and *unus*, especially the former, were called in to help this deficiency. In the forms of Marculfus, published towards the end of the seventh century, *ille* continually occurs as an article; and it appears to have been sometimes used in the sixth. This of course, by an easy abbreviation, furnished the articles in French and Italian. The people came soon to establish more uniformity of case in the noun, either by rejecting inflexions, or by diminishing their number. —Raynouard gives a long list of old French nouns formed from the Latin accusative by suppressing *em* or *am*.* The active auxiliary

* See a passage of Quintilian, l. 9. c. 4., quoted in Hallam's Middle Ages, iii. 316.

In the grammar of Cassiodorus, a mere compilation from old writers, and in this instance from one

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verb, than which nothing is more distinctive of the modern languages from the Latin, came in from the same cause, the disuse, through ignorance, of several inflexions of the tenses; to which we must add, that here also the Latin language is singularly deficient, possessing no means of distinguishing the second perfect from the first, or 'I have seen' from 'I saw.' The auxiliary verb was early applied in France and Italy to supply this defect; and some have produced what they think occasional instances of its employment even in the best classical authors.

Continu-
ance of
Latin in
seventh
century.

28. It seems impossible to determine the progress of these changes, the degrees of variation between the polite and popular, the written and spoken Latin, in the best ages of Rome, in the decline of the empire, and in the kingdoms founded upon its ruins; or finally, the exact epoch when the grammatical language ceased to be generally intelligible. There remains therefore some room still for hypothesis and difference of opinion. The clergy preached in Latin early in the seventh century, and we have a popular song

Cornutus, we find another remarkable passage, which I do not remember to have seen quoted, though doubtless it has been so, on the pronunciation of the letter *M*. To utter this final consonant, he says, before a word beginning with a vowel, is wrong, *durum ac barbarum sonat*; but it is an equal fault to omit it before one beginning with a consonant; *par enim atque idem est vitium, ita cum vocali sicut cum consonant M literam, exprimere.* Cassio-

dorus, *De orthographia*, cap. 1. Thus we perceive that there was a nicety as to the pronunciation of this letter, which uneducated persons would naturally not regard. Hence in the inscriptions of a low age, we frequently find this letter omitted; as in one quoted by Muratori, *Ego L. Contius me bibo [vivo] archa [archam] feci*, and it is very easy to multiply instances. Thus the neuter and the accusative terminations were lost.

of the same age on the victory obtained by Clotaire II. in 622 over the Saxons.* This has been surmised by some to be a translation, merely because the Latin is better than they suppose to have been spoken. But, though the words are probably not given quite correctly, they seem reducible, with a little emendation, to short verses of an usual rhythmical cadence. †

29. But in the middle of the eighth century, we find the rustic language mentioned as distinct from Latin ‡; and in the council of Tours held in 813 it is ordered that homilies shall be explained to the people in their own tongue, whether rustic Roman or Frankish. In 842 we find the earliest written evidence of its existence, in the celebrated oaths taken by Louis of Germany and his brother Charles the Bald, as well as by their vassals, the former in Frankish or early German, the latter in their own current dialect. This, though with somewhat of a closer resemblance to Latin, is accounted by the best judges a specimen of the language spoken south of the Loire; after-

It is changed to a new language in eighth and ninth.

* Le Bœuf, in *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.* vol. xvii.

† Turner, in *Archæologia*, vol. xiv. 173. Hallam's *Middle Ages*, iii. 326. Bouterwek, *Gesch. der Französischen Poesie*, p. 18., observes, that there are many fragments of popular Latin songs preserved. I have not found any quoted, except one, which he gives from La Ravallère, which is simple and rather pretty; but I know not whence it is taken. It seems the song of a female slave, and is perhaps nearly as old as the destruction of the empire.

At quid jubes, pusiole,
Quare mandas, filiolo,
Carmen dulce me cantare
Cum sim longe exul valde

Intra mare,
O cur jubes canere?

Intra seems put for trans. The metre is rhymed trochaic; but that is consistent with antiquity. It is however more pleasing than most of the Latin verse of this period, and is more in the tone of the modern languages. As it is not at all a hackneyed passage, I have thought it worthy of quotation.

‡ *Acad. des Inscript.* xvii. 713.

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wards variously called the *Langue d'oc*, *Provençal*, or *Limousin*, and essentially the same with the dialects of *Catalonia* and *Valencia*.* It is decidedly the opinion of M. Raynouard, as it was of earlier inquirers, that the general language of France in the ninth century was the southern dialect, rather than that of the north, to which we now give the exclusive name of French, and which they conceive to have deviated from it afterwards.† And he has employed great labour to prove, that, both in Spain and Italy, this language was generally spoken with hardly as much difference from that of France, as constitutes even a variation of dialect; the articles, pronouns, and auxiliaries being nearly identical; most probably not with so much difference as would render the native of one country by any means unintelligible in another.‡

* Du Cange, p. 35. Raynouard, *passim*. M. de la Rue has called it 'un *Latin expirant*.' *Recherches sur les Bardes d'Armorique*. Between this and 'un *Français naissant*' there may be only a verbal distinction; but, in accuracy of definition, I should think M. Raynouard much more correct. The language of this oath cannot be called Latin without a violent stretch of words; no Latin scholar, as such, would understand it, except by conjecture. On the other hand, most of the words, as we learn from M. R., are *Provençal* of the twelfth century. The passage has been often printed, and sometimes incorrectly. M. Roquefort, in the preface to his *Glossaire de la Langue Romane*, has given a tracing from an ancient manuscript of Nitard, the historian of the 9th century, to whom we owe this important record of language.

† The chief difference was in orthography; the Northerners wrote Latin words with an *e* where the South retained *a*; as *charitet*, *caritat*; *veritet*, *veritat*; *appelet*, *apelat*. Si l'on rétablissait dans les plus anciens textes Français les *a* primitifs en place des *e*, on aurait identiquement la langue des troubadours. Raynouard, *Observations sur le Roman du Rou*, 1829, p. 5.

‡ The proofs of this similarity occupy most part of the first six volumes in M. Raynouard's excellent work.

It is a common error to suppose that French and Italian had a double source, barbaric as well as Latin; and that the northern nations, in conquering those regions, brought in a large share of their own language. This is like the opinion, that the Norman Conquest infused the French we now find in our own tongue. There

30. Thus, in the eighth and ninth centuries, if not before, France had acquired a language, unquestionably nothing else than a corruption of Latin, (for the Celtic or Teutonic words that entered into it were by no means numerous, and did not influence its structure,) but become so distinct from its parent, through modes of pronunciation as well as grammatical changes, that it requires some degree of practice to trace the derivation of words in many instances. It might be expected that we should be able to adduce, or at least prove to have existed, a series of monuments in this new form of speech. It might naturally appear that poetry, the voice of the soul, would have been heard wherever the joys and sufferings, the hopes and cares of humanity, wherever the countenance of nature, or the manners of social life, supplied their boundless treasures to its choice; and among untutored nations it has been rarely silent. Of the existence of verse, however, in this early period of the new languages, we find scarce any testimony, a doubtful passage in a Latin poem of the ninth century excepted *, till we

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Early specimens of
French.

are certainly Teutonic words, both in French and Italian, but not sufficient to affect the proposition that these languages are merely Latin in their origin. These words in many instances express what Latin could not; thus *guerra* was by no means synonymous with *bellum*. Yet even Roquesfort talks of "un jargon composé de mots Tudesques et Romains." Discours Preliminaire, p. 19.; forgetting which, he more justly remarks afterwards, on the oath of Charles

the Bald, that it shows, "*la langue Romane est entièrement composée de Latin.*" A long list could, no doubt, be made of French and Italian words that cannot easily be traced to any Latin with which we are acquainted; but we may be surprised that it is not still longer.

* In a Latin eclogue quoted by Paschasius Radbert (ob. 865) in the life of St. Adalhard, abbot of Corbie (ob. 826), the romance poets are called upon to join the Latins in the following lines:

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I.Poem on
Boethius.

come to a production on the captivity of Boethius, versified chiefly from passages in his Consolation, which M. Raynouard, though somewhat wishing to assign a higher date, places about the year 1000. This is printed by him from a manuscript formerly in the famous abbey of Fleury, or St. Benoit-sur-Loire, and now in the public library of Orleans. It is a fragment of 250 lines, written in stanzas of six, seven, or a greater number of verses of ten syllables, sometimes deviating to eleven or twelve; and all the lines in each stanza rhyming masculinely with each other. It is certainly by much the earliest specimen of French verse*; even if it should only belong, as Le Bœuf thought, to the eleventh century.

Provençal
grammar.

31. M. Raynouard has asserted what will hardly bear dispute, that "there has never been composed any considerable work in any language, till it has acquired determinate forms of expressing the modifications of ideas according to time, number, and person," or, in other words, the elements of grammar.† But whether the Provençal or Romance

"*Rustica concelebret Romana
Latinaque lingua,
Saxo, qui, pariter plangens, pro
carmine dicat;
Vertite huc cuncti, cecinit quam
maximus ille,
Et tumulum facite, et tumulo
superaddite carmen.*"

Raynouard, *Choix des Poésies*, vol. ii. p. cxxxv. These lines are scarcely intelligible; but the quotation from Virgil, in the ninth century, perhaps deserves remark, though, in one of Charlemagne's monasteries, it is not by any means astonishing. Nennius, a Welsh

monk of the same age, who can hardly write Latin at all, has quoted another line; "*Purpurea intexti tollant aulâ a Britanni;*" which is more extraordinary, and almost leads us to suspect an interpolation, unless he took it from Bede. Gale, *xv Scriptores*, iii. 102.

* Raynouard, vol. ii. pp. 5, 6, and preface, p. cxxvii.

† *Observations philologiques et grammaticales, sur le Roman de Rou* (1829), p. 26. Two ancient Provençal grammars, one by Raymond Vidal, in the twelfth century, are in existence. The language

language were in its infancy so defective, he does not say; nor does the grammar he has given lead us to that inference. This grammar, indeed, is necessarily framed, in great measure, out of more recent materials. It may be suspected, perhaps, that a language formed by mutilating the words of another, could not for many ages be rich or flexible enough for the variety of poetic expression. And the more ancient forms would long retain their prerogative in writing: or, perhaps, we can only say, that the absence of poetry was the effect, as well as the evidence, of that intellectual barrenness, more characteristic of the dark ages than their ignorance.

32. In Italy, where we may conceive the corruption of language to have been less extensive, and where the spoken patois had never acquired a distinctive name, like *lingua Romana* in France, we find two remarkable proofs, as they seem, that Latin was not wholly unintelligible in the ninth and tenth centuries, and which therefore modify

Latin retained in use longer in Italy.

therefore must have had its determinate rules before that time.

M. Raynouard has shown, with a prodigality of evidence, the regularity of the French or Romance language in the twelfth century, and its retention of Latin forms, in cases when it had not been suspected. Thus it is a fundamental rule, that, in nouns masculine, the nominative ends in *s* in the singular, but wants it in the plural; while the oblique cases lose it in the singular, but retain it in the plural. This is evidently derived from the second declension in Latin. As, for example—

Sing. Li princes est venus, et a este sacrez rois.

Plu. Li evesque et li plus noble baron se sont assemble."

Thus also the possessive pronoun is always *mes, tes, ses*, (*meus, tuus, suus*) in the nominative singular; *mon, ton, son*, (*meum, &c.*) in the oblique regimen. It has been through ignorance of such rules that the old French poetry has seemed capricious, and destitute of strict grammar; and, in a philosophical sense, the simplicity and extensiveness of M. Raynouard's discovery entitle it to the appellation of beautiful.

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M. Raynouard's hypothesis as to the simultaneous origin of the Romance tongue. The one is a popular song of the soldiers, on their march to rescue the Emperor Louis II. in 881, from the violent detention in which he had been placed by the duke of Benevento; the other, a similar exhortation to the defenders of Modena in 924, when that city was in danger of siege from the Hungarians. Both of these were published by Muratori, in his fortieth dissertation on Italian Antiquities; and both have been borrowed from him by M. Sismondi, in his *Littérature du Midi*.* The former of these poems is in a loose trochaic measure, totally destitute of regard to grammatical inflexions. Yet some of the leading peculiarities of Italian, the article and the auxiliary verb, do not appear. The latter is in accentual iambics, with a sort of monotonous termination in the nature of rhyme; and in very much superior Latinity, probably the work of an ecclesiastic.† It is difficult to account for either of these, especially the former, which is merely a military song, except on the supposition that the Latin language was not grown wholly out of popular use.

* Vol. i. pp. 23. 27.

† I am at a loss to know what Muratori means by saying, "Son versi di dodici sillabe, ma computata la ragione de' tempi, vengono ad essere uguali a gli endecasillabi. p. 551. He could not have understood the metre, which is perfectly regular, and even harmonious, on the condition only, that no "ragione de' tempi" except such as accentual pronunciation observes, shall be demanded. The first two lines will serve as a specimen:—

"O tu, qui servas armis ista
mænia,
Noli dormire, moneo, sed vigila."

This is like another strange observation of Muratori in the same dissertation, that, in the well-known lines of the emperor Adrian to his soul, "Animula vagula, blandula," which could perplex no school-boy, he cannot discover "un'esatta norma di metro;" and therefore takes them to be merely rhythmical.

33. In the eleventh century, France still affords us but few extant writings. Several, indeed, can be shown to have once existed. The Romance language, comprehending the two divisions of Provençal and Northern French, by this time distinctly separate from each other, was now, say the authors of the *Histoire Litteraire de la France*, employed in poetry, romances, translations, and original works in different kinds of literature; sermons were preached in it, and the code, called the *Assises de Jerusalem*, was drawn up under Godfrey of Bouillon in 1100.* Some part of this is doubtful, and especially the age of these laws. They do not mention those of William the Conqueror, recorded in French by Ingulfus. Doubts have been cast by a distinguished living critic on the age of this French code, and upon the authenticity of the History of Ingulfus itself; which he conceives, upon very plausible grounds, to be a forgery of Richard II.'s time: the language of the laws indeed appears to be very ancient, but not probably distinguishable at this day from the French of the twelfth century. It may be said, in general, that, except one or two translations from books of Scripture, very little now extant has been clearly referred to an earlier period.† Yet it is impossible to doubt that the

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French of
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century.

* Vol. vii. p. 107.

† Roquefort, *Glossaire de la Langue Romane*, p. 25., and *Etat de la Poesie Française*, p. 42. and 206., mentions several religious works in the royal library, and also a metrical romance in the British Museum, lately published in France, on the fabulous voyage of Charlemagne to Constantinople.

Raynouard has collected a few fragments in Provençal. But I must dissent from this excellent writer in referring the famous poem of the Vaudois, *La Nobla Leyczon*, to the year 1100. *Choix des Poesies des Troubadours*, vol. ii. p. cxxxvii. I have already observed, that the two lines which contain what he calls *la date de l'an 1100*,

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language was much employed in poetry, and had been gradually ramifying itself by the shoots of invention and sentiment ; since, at the close of this age, or in the next, we find a constellation of gay and brilliant versifiers, the Troubadours of southern France, and a corresponding class to the north of the Loire.

Metres of
modern
languages.

34. These early poets in the modern languages chiefly borrowed their forms of versification from the Latin. It is unnecessary to say, that metrical composition in that language, as in Greek, was an arrangement of verses corresponding by equal or equivalent feet ; all syllables being presumed to

are so loosely expressed, as to include the whole ensuing century. (Hallam's Middle Ages, iii. 467.) And I am now convinced that the poem is not much older than 1200. It seems probable that they reckoned 1100 years, on a loose computation, not from the Christian era, but from the time when the passage of Scripture to which these lines allude was written. The allusion may be to 1 Pet. i. 20. But it is clear that, at the time of the composition of this poem, not only the name of *Vaudois* had been imposed on those sectaries, but they had become subject to persecution. We know nothing of this till near the end of the century. This poem was probably written in the south of France, and carried afterwards to the Alpine valleys of Piedmont, from which it was brought to Geneva and England in the seventeenth century. La Nobla Leyczon is published at length by Raynouard. It consists of 479 lines, which seem to be rhythmical or aberrant

Alexandrines ; the rhymes uncertain in number, chiefly masculine. The poem censures the corruptions of the church, but contains little that would be considered heretical ; which agrees with what contemporary historians relate of the original Waldenses. Any doubts as to the authenticity of this poem are totally unreasonable. M. Raynouard, an indisputably competent judge, observes, "Les personnes qui l'examineront avec attention jugeront que le manuscrit n'a pas été interpolé," p. cxliii.

I will here reprint more accurately than before, the two lines supposed to give the poem the date of 1100 : —

"Ben ha mil et cent anz compli
entièrement,
Que fo scripta l'ora car sen al
derier temps."

Can M. Raynouard, or any one else, be warranted by this in saying, *La date de l'an 1100*, qu'on lit dans ce poème, merite toute confiance ?

fall under a known division of long and short, the former passing for strictly the double of the latter in quantity of time. By this law of pronunciation all verse was measured; and to this not only actors, who were assisted by an accompaniment, but the orators also endeavoured to conform. But the accented, or, if we choose rather to call them so, emphatic syllables, being regulated by a very different though uniform law, the uninstructed people, especially in the decline of Latinity, pronounced, as we now do, with little or no regard to the metrical quantity of syllables, but according to their accentual value. And this gave rise to the popular or rhythmical poetry of the lower empire; traces of which may be found in the second century, and even much earlier, but of which we have abundant proofs after the age of Constantine.* All metre, as Augustin says, was rhythm, but all rhythm was not metre: in rhythmical verse, neither the quantity of syllables, that is, the time allotted to each by metrical rule, nor even, in some degree, their number, was regarded, so long as a cadence was retained in which the ear could recognise a certain approach to uniformity. Much popular poetry, both religious and profane, and the public hymns of the church, were written in this manner; the distinction of long and short syllables, even while Latin remained a living tongue, was lost in speech,

* The well-known lines of Adrian to Florus, and his reply, "Ego nolo Florus esse," &c. are accentual trochaics, but not wholly so; for the last line, *Scythicas pati pruinas*, requires the word *pati* to

be sounded as an iambic. They are not the earliest instance extant of disregard to quantity: for Suetonius quotes some satirical lines on Julius Cæsar.

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and required study to attain it. The accent or emphasis, both of which are probably, to a certain extent, connected with quantity and with each other, supplied its place; the accented syllable being, perhaps, generally lengthened in ordinary speech; though this is not the sole cause of length, for no want of emphasis or lowness of tone can render a syllable of many letters short. Thus we find two species of Latin verse: one metrical, which Prudentius, Fortunatus, and others aspired to write; the other rhythmical, somewhat licentious in number of syllables, and wholly accentual in its pronunciation. But this kind was founded on the former, and imitated the ancient syllabic arrangements. Thus the trochaic, or line, in which the stress falls on the uneven syllables, commonly alternating by eight and seven, a very popular metre from its spirited flow, was adopted in military songs, such as that already mentioned of the Italian soldiers in the ninth century. It was also common in religious chants. The line of eight syllables, or dimeter iambic, in which the cadence falls on the even places, was still more frequent in ecclesiastical verse. But these are the most ordinary forms of versification in the early French or Provençal, Spanish, and Italian languages. The line of eleven syllables, which became in time still more usual than the former, is nothing else than the ancient hendecasyllable; from which the French, in what they call masculine rhymes, and ourselves more generally, from a still greater deficiency of final vowels, have been forced to retrench the last syllable. The Alexandrine of twelve

syllables might seem to be the trimeter iambic of the ancients. But Sanchez has very plausibly referred its origin to a form more usual in the dark ages, the pentameter; and shown it in some early Spanish poetry.* The Alexandrine, in the southern languages, had generally a feminine termination, that is, in a short vowel, thus becoming of thirteen syllables, the stress falling on the penultimate, as is the usual case in a Latin pentameter verse, accentually read in our present mode. The variation of syllables in these Alexandrines, which run from twelve to fourteen, is accounted for by the similar numerical variety in the pentameter.

35. I have dwelt, perhaps tediously, on this subject, because vague notions of a derivation of modern metrical arrangements, even in the languages of Latin origin, from the Arabs or Scandinavians, have sometimes gained credit. It has been imagined also, that the peculiar characteristic of the new poetry, rhyme, was borrowed from the Saracens of Spain.† But the Latin language

Origin of
rhyme in
Latin.

* The break in the middle of the Alexandrine, it will occur to every competent judge, has nothing analogous to it in the trimeter iambic, but exactly corresponds to the invariable law of the pentameter.

† Roquefort, *Essai sur la Poesie Française dans le 12^{me} et 13^{me} siècles*, p. 66. Galvani, *Osservazioni sulla Poesia de' Trovatori*. (Modena, 1829.) Sanchez, *Poesias Castellanas anteriores al 15^{mo} siglo*, vol. i. p. 122.

Tyrwhitt had already observed, "the metres which the Normans used, and which we seem to have borrowed from them, were plainly

copied from the Latin rhythmical verses, which, in the declension of that language, were current in various forms among those who either did not understand, or did not regard, the true quantity of syllables; and the practice of rhyming is probably to be deduced from the same original." *Essay on the Language and Versification of Chaucer*, p. 51.

† Andrès, with a partiality to the Saracens of Spain, whom, by an odd blunder, he takes for his countrymen, manifested in almost every page, does not fail to urge this. It had been said long before by Huet, and others who lived

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abounds so much in consonances, that those who have been accustomed to write verses in it well know the difficulty of avoiding them, as much as an ear formed on classical models demands; and as this gingle is certainly pleasing in itself, it is not wonderful that the less fastidious vulgar should adopt it in their rhythmical songs. It has been proved by Muratori, Gray, and Turner, beyond the possibility of doubt, that rhymed Latin verse was in use from the end of the fourth century.*

Provençal
and French
poetry.

36. Thus, about the time of the first crusade, we find two dialects of the same language, differing by that time not inconsiderably from each other, the Provençal and French, possessing a regular grammar, established forms of versification, (and the early troubadours added several to those borrowed from the Latin†), and a flexibility which gave free scope to the graceful turns of poetry. William, duke of Guienne, has the glory of leading the van of surviving Provençal songsters. He was born in 1070, and may possibly have composed some of his little poems before he joined the crusaders in 1096. If these are genuine, and no doubt of them seems to be entertained, they denote a considerable degree of previous refinement in

before these subjects had been thoroughly investigated. *Origine e Progresso*, &c., ii. 194. He has been copied by Ginguéné and Sismondi.

* Muratori, *Antichità Italiane* dissert., 40. Turner, in *Archæologia*, vol. xiv., and *Hist. of England*, vol. iv. pp. 328. 653. Gray has gone as deeply as any one into this subject; and, though writing

at what may be called an early period of metrical criticism, he has fallen into a few errors, and been too easy of credence, unanswerably proves the Latin origin of rhyme. Gray's *Works* by Mathias, vol. ii. p. 30—54.

† See Raynouard, Roquefort, and Galvani, for the Provençal and French metres, which are very complicated.

the language.* We do not, I believe, meet with any other troubadour till after the middle of the twelfth century. From that time till about the close of the thirteenth, they were numerous almost as the gay insects of spring; names of illustrious birth are mingled in the list with those whom genius has saved from obscurity; they were the delight of a luxurious nobility, the pride of southern France, while the great fiefs of Toulouse and Guienne were in their splendour. Their style soon extended itself to the northern dialect. Abelard was the first of recorded name, who taught the banks of the Seine to resound a tale of love; and it was of Eloise that he sung.† “You composed,” says that gifted and noble-spirited woman, in one of her letters to him, “many verses in amorous measure, so sweet both in their language and their melody, that your name was incessantly in the mouths of all, and even the most illiterate could not be forgetful of you. This it was chiefly that made women admire you. And as most of these songs were on me and my love, they made me known in many countries, and caused many women to envy me. Every tongue spoke of your Eloise; every street, every house resounded with my name.”‡ These poems of Abelard are lost; but

* Raynouard, *Choix des Poésies des Troubadours*, vol. ii. Auguis, *Recueil des Anciens Poètes Français*, vol. i.

† Bouterwek, on the authority of La Ravallere, seems to doubt whether these poems of Abelard were in French or Latin. *Gesch. der Franzözen Poesie*, p. 18. I be-

lieve this would be thought quite paradoxical by any critic at present.

‡ Duo autem, fateor, tibi specialiter inerant, quibus feminarum quarumlibet animos statim allicere poterat, dictandi videlicet et cantandi gratia; quæ cæteros minimè philosophos assecutos esse novi-

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in the Norman, or northern French language, we have an immense number of poets belonging to the twelfth, and the two following centuries. One hundred and twenty-seven are known by name in the twelfth alone.* Thibault, king of Navarre and count of Champagne, about the middle of the next, is accounted the best, as well as noblest of French poets.

37. In this French and Provençal poetry, if we come to the consideration of it historically, descending from an earlier period, we are at once

mus. Quibus quidem quasi ludo quodam laborem exercitii recreans philosophici pleraque amatorio metro vel rithmo composita reliquisti carmina, quæ præ nimia suavitate tam dictaminis quam cantus sæpius frequentata tuum in ore omnium nomen incessanter tenebant, ut etiam illiteratos melodiæ dulcedo tui non sineret immemores esse. Atque hinc maxime in amorem tui feminæ suspirabant. Et cum horum pars maxima carminum nostros decantaret amores, multis me regionibus brevi tempore nunciavit, et multarum in me feminarum accendit invidiam. And in another place: Frequenti carmine tuam in ore omnium Helloissæ ponebas: me plateæ omnes, me domus singulæ resonabant. Epist. Abælardi et Helloissæ. These epistles of Abelard and Eloisa, especially those of the latter, are, as far as I know, the first book that gives any pleasure in reading which had been produced in Europe for 600 years, since the Consolation of Boethius. But I do not press my negative judgment. We may at least say that the writers of the dark ages, if they have left any thing intrin-

sically very good, have been ill-treated by the learned, who have failed to extract it. Pope, it may be here observed, has done great injustice to Eloisa in his unrivalled Epistle, by putting the sentiments of a coarse and abandoned woman into her mouth. Her refusal to marry Abelard arose not from an abstract predilection for the name of mistress above that of wife, but from her disinterested affection, which would not deprive him of the prospect of ecclesiastical dignities, to which his genius and renown might lead him. She judged very unwisely, as it turned out, but from an unbounded generosity of character. He was, in fact, unworthy of her affection, which she expresses in the tenderest language. Deum testem invoco, si me Augustus universo præsidens mundo matrimonii honore dignaretur, totumque mihi orbem confirmaret in perpetuum præsidendum, charius mihi et dignius videretur tua dici meretrix quam illius imperatrix.

* Auguis, Discours Préliminaire, p. 2. Roquefort, Etat de la Poésie Française aux 12me et 13me siècles.

struck by the vast preponderance of amorous ditties. The Greek and Roman muses, especially the latter, seem frigid as their own fountain in comparison. Satires on the great, and especially on the clergy, exhortations to the crusade, and religious odes, are intermingled in the productions of the troubadours; but love is the prevailing theme. This tone they could hardly have borrowed from the rhythmical Latin verses, of which all that remain are without passion or energy. They could as little have been indebted to their predecessors for a peculiar gracefulness, an indescribable charm of gaiety and ease, which many of their lighter poems display. This can only be ascribed to the polish of chivalrous manners, and to the influence of feminine delicacy on public taste. The well known dialogue, for example, of Horace and Lydia, is justly praised; nothing extant of this amœbean character, from Greece or Rome, is nearly so good. But such alternate stanzas, between speakers of different sexes, are very common in the early French poets; and it would be easy to find some quite equal to Horace in grace and spirit. They had even a generic name, *tensons*, contentions; that is, dialogues of lively repartee, such as we are surprised to find in the twelfth century, an age accounted by many almost barbarous. None of these are prettier than what are called *pastourelles*, in which the poet is feigned to meet a shepherdess, whose love he solicits, and by whom he is repelled, (not always finally), in alternate stanzas.* Some

* These have, as Galvani has the twenty-seventh pastoral of observed, an ancient prototype in Theocritus, which Dryden has

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of these may be read in Roquefort, *Etat de la Poésie Française, dans le 12me et 13me siècles*; others in Raynouard, *Choix des Poésies des Troubadours*; in Auguis, *Recueil des Anciens Poètes Français*; or in Galvani, *Osservazioni sulla Poesia de' Trovatori*.

38. In all these light compositions which gallantry or gaiety inspired, we perceive the characteristic excellencies of French poetry, as distinctly as in the best vaudeville of the age of Louis XV. We can really sometimes find little difference, except an obsolescence of language, which gives them a kind of poignancy. And this style, as I have observed, seems to have been quite original in France, though it was imitated by other nations.* The French poetry, on the other hand, was deficient in strength and ardour. It was also too much filled with monotonous common-places; among which the tedious descriptions of spring,

translated with no diminution of its freedom. Some of the Pastourelles are also rather licentious; but that is not the case with the greater part. M. Raynouard, in an article of the *Journal des Savans* for 1824, p. 613, remarks the superior decency of the southern poets, scarcely four or five transgressing in that respect; while many of the fabliaux in the collections of Barbazan and Méon are of the most coarse and stupid ribaldry; and such that even the object of exhibiting ancient manners and language scarcely warranted their publication in so large a number.

* *Andrès*, as usual, derives the Provençal style of poetry from the

Arabians; and this has been countenanced, in some measure, by Ginguéné and Sismondi. Some of the peculiarities of the Troubadours, their tençons, or contentions, and the envoi, or termination of a poem, by an address to the poem itself or the reader, are said to be of Arabian origin. In assuming that rhyme was introduced by the same channel, these writers are probably mistaken. But I have seen too little of oriental, and, especially, of Hispano-Saracenic poetry, to form any opinion how far the more essential characteristics of Provençal verse may have been derived from it. One seems to find more of oriental hyperbole in the Castilian poetry.

and the everlasting nightingale, are eminently to be reckoned. These, perhaps, are less frequent in the early poems, most of which are short, than they became in the prolix expansion adopted by the allegorical school in the fourteenth century. They prevail, as is well known, in Chaucer, Dunbar, and several other of our own poets.

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39. The metrical romances, far from common in Provençal *, but forming a large portion of what was written in the northern dialect, though occasionally picturesque, graceful, or animated, are seldom free from tedious or prosaic details. The earliest of these extant seems to be that of Havelok the Dane, of which an abridgment was made by Geoffrey Gaimnar, before the middle of the twelfth century. The story is certainly a popular legend from the Danish part of England, which the French versifier has called, according to the fashion of romances, “a Breton lay.” If this word meant any thing more than relating to Britain, it is a plain falsehood; and upon either hypothesis, it may lead us to doubt, as many other reasons may also, what has been so much asserted of late years, as to the Armorican origin of romantic fictions; since the word Breton, which some critics refer to Armorica, is here applied to a story of mere English birth.† It cannot, how-

Metrical
romances.
Havelok
the Dane.

* It has been denied that there are any metrical romances in Provençal. But one called the *Philomena*, on the fabulous history of Charlemagne, is written after 1173, but not much later than 1200. *Journal des Savans*, 1824.

† The *Recherches sur les Bardes*

d’Armorique, by that respectable veteran, M. de la Rue, are very unsatisfactory. It does not appear that the Bretons have so much as a national tradition of any romantic poetry; nor any writings in their language older than 1450. The authority of Warton, Leyden,

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of French
language.

ever, be doubted, from the absurd introduction of Arthur's name in this romance of Havelok, that it was written after the publication of the splendid fables of Geoffrey.*

40. Two more celebrated poems are by Wace, a native of Jersey; one, a free version of the history lately published by Geoffrey of Monmouth; the other, a narrative of the Battle of Hastings and Conquest of England. Many other romances followed. Much has been disputed for some years concerning them, and the lays and fabliaux of the northern *trouveurs*; it is sufficient here to observe, that they afforded a copious source of amusement and interest to those who read or listened, as far as the French language was diffused; and this was far beyond the boundaries of France. Not only was it the common spoken tongue of what is called the court, or generally of the superior

Ellis, Turner, and Price have rendered this hypothesis of early Armorican romance popular; but I cannot believe that so baseless a fabric will endure much longer. Is it credible that tales of aristocratic splendour and courtesies sprung up in so poor and uncivilised a country as Bretagne? Traditional stories they might, no doubt, possess, and some of these may be found in the *Lais de Marie*, and other early poems; but not romances of chivalry. I do not recollect, though speaking without confidence, that any proof has been given of Armorican traditions about Arthur, earlier than the history of Geoffrey: for it seems too much to interpret the word *Britones* of them rather than of the Welsh. Mr. Turner, I ob-

serve, without absolutely recanting, has much receded from his opinion of the Armorican prototype of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

* The romance of Havelok was printed by Sir Frederick Madden in 1829; but not for sale. His Introduction is of considerable value. The story of Havelok is that of Curan and Argentile, in Warner's *Albion's England*, upon which Mason founded a drama. Sir F. Madden refers the English translation to some time between 1270 and 1290. The manuscript is in the Bodleian Library. The French original has since been reprinted in France, as I learn from Brunet's *Supplement au Manuel du Libraire*. Both this and its abridgement, by Geoffrey Gaimnar, are in the British Museum.

ranks, in England, but in Italy and in Germany, at least throughout the thirteenth century. Brunetto Latini wrote his philosophical compilation, called *Le Tresor*, in French, "because," as he says, "the language was more agreeable and usual than any other." Italian, in fact, was hardly employed in prose at that time. But for those whose education had not gone so far, the romances and tales of France began to be rendered into German, as early as the latter part of the twelfth century, as they were long afterwards into English, becoming the basis of those popular songs, which illustrate the period of the Swabian emperors, the great house of Hohenstauffen, Frederic Barbarossa, Henry VI., and Frederic II.

41. The poets of Germany, during this period of extraordinary fertility in versification, were not less numerous than those of France and Provence.* From Henry of Veldek to the last of the lyric poets, soon after the beginning of the fourteenth century, not less than two hundred are known by name. A collection made in that age by Rudiger von Manasse of Zurich contains the productions of one hundred and forty; and modern editors have much enlarged the list.† Henry of Veldek is placed by Eichhorn about 1170, and by Bouterwek twenty years later; so that at the utmost we cannot reckon the period of their duration more than a century and a half. But the great difference perceptible between the poetry of Henry and that of the old German songs proves him not

German
poetry of
Swabian
period.

* Bouterwek, p. 95.

† Id. p. 98. This collection was published in 1758 by Bodmer.

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to have been the earliest of the Swabian school: he is as polished in language and versification as any of his successors; and though a northern, he wrote in the dialect of the house of Hohenstauffen. Wolfram von Eschenbach, in the first years of the next century, is, perhaps, the most eminent name of the Minne-singers, as the lyric poets were denominated, and is also the translator of several romances. The golden age of German poetry was before the fall of the Swabian dynasty, at the death of Conrad IV., in 1254. Love, as the word denotes, was the peculiar theme of the Minne-singers; but it was chiefly from the northern or southern dialects of France, especially the latter, that they borrowed their amorous strains.* In the latter part of the thirteenth century, we find less

* Herder, *Zerstreute Blätter*, vol. v. p. 206. Eichhorn, *Allg. Geschichte der Cultur*, vol. i. p. 226. Heinsius, *Teut, oder Lehrbuch der Deutschen Sprachwissenschaft*, vol. iv. pp. 32—80. Weber's *Illustrations of Northern Antiquities*, 1814. This work contains the earliest analysis, I believe, of the *Nibelungen Lied*. But above all, I have been indebted to the excellent account of German poetry by Bouterwek, in the ninth volume of his great work, the *History of Poetry and Eloquence* since the thirteenth century. In this volume the mediæval poetry of Germany occupies nearly four hundred closely printed pages. I have since met with a pleasing little volume, on the *Lays of the Minne-singers*, by Mr. Edgar Taylor. It contains an account of the chief of those poets, with translations, perhaps in too modern a style, though it may be true that no other would suit our modern taste.

A species of love-song, peculiar, according to Weber, (p. 9.) to the Minne-singers, are called *Watchmen's Songs*. These consist in a dialogue between a lover and the sentinel who guards his mistress. The latter is persuaded to imitate "Sir Pandarus of Troy;" and when morning breaks, summons the lover to quit his lady; who, in her turn, maintains that "it is the nightingale, and not the lark," with almost the pertinacity of Juliet.

Mr. Taylor remarks, that the German poets do not go so far in their idolatry of the fair as the Provençals, p. 127. I do not concur altogether in his reasons; but as the Minne-singers imitated the Provençals, this deviation is remarkable. I should rather ascribe it to the hyperbolic tone which the Troubadours had borrowed from the Arabians, or to the susceptibility of their temperament.

of feeling and invention, but a more didactic and moral tone, sometimes veiled in Æsopic fables, sometimes openly satirical. Conrad of Wurtzburg is the chief of the later school; but he had to lament the decline of taste and manners in his own age.

42. No poetry, however, of the Swabian period is so national as the epic romances, which drew their subjects from the highest antiquity, if they did not even adopt the language of primæval bards, which, perhaps, though it has been surmised, is not compatible with their style. In the two most celebrated productions of this kind, the *Helden Buch*, or Book of Heroes, and the *Nibelungen Lied*, the Lay of the Nibelungen, a fabulous people, we find the recollections of an heroic age, wherein the names of Attila and Theodoric stand out as witnesses of traditional history, clouded by error and coloured by fancy. The *Nibelungen Lied*, in its present form, is by an uncertain author, perhaps, about the year 1200 *; but it comes, and

* Weber says,—“I have no doubt whatever that the romance itself is of very high antiquity, at least of the eleventh century, though, certainly, the present copy has been considerably modernised.” *Illustrations of Northern Romances*, p. 26. But Bouterwek does not seem to think it of so ancient a date; and I believe it is commonly referred to about the year 1200. Schlegel ascribes it to Henry von Offerdingen. Heinsius, iv. 52.

It is highly probable, that the “*barbara et antiquissima carmina*,” which, according to Eginhard, Charlemagne caused to be reduced to writing, were no other than the

legends of the *Nibelungen Lied*, and similar traditions of the Gothic and Burgundian time. Weber, p. 6. I will here mention, as I believe it is little known in England, a curious Latin epic poem on the wars of Attila, published by Fischer in 1780. He conceives it to be of the sixth century; but others have referred it to the eighth. The heroes are Franks; but the whole is fabulous, except the name of Attila and his Huns. I do not know whether this has any connection with a French poem on Attila, by a writer named Casola, existing in manuscript at Modena. A translation into Italian was pub-

CHAP. I. as far as we can judge with little or no interpolation of circumstances, from an age anterior to Christianity, to civilisation, and to the more refined forms of chivalry. We cannot well think the stories later than the sixth or seventh centuries. The German critics admire the rude grandeur of this old epic; and its fables, marked with a character of barbarous simplicity wholly unlike that of later romance, are become, in some degree, familiar to ourselves.

Decline of
German
poetry.

43. The loss of some accomplished princes, and of a near intercourse with the south of France and with Italy, the augmented independence of the German nobility, to be maintained by unceasing warfare, rendered their manners, from the latter part of the thirteenth century, more rude than before. They ceased to cultivate poetry, or to think it honourable in their rank. Meantime a new race of poets, chiefly burghers of towns, sprung up about the reign of Rodolph of Hapsburgh, before the lays of the Minne-singers had yet ceased to resound. These prudent, though not inspired, votaries of the muse, chose the didactic and moral style as more salutary than the love songs, and more reasonable than the romances. They became known in the fourteenth century,

lished by Rossi at Ferrara in 1568: it is one of the scarcest books in the world. Weber's Illustrations, p. 23. Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. ii. 178. Galvani, Osservazioni sulla poesia de'trovatori, p. 16.

The Nibelungen Lied seems to have been less popular in the middle ages than other romances;

evidently because it relates to a different state of manners. Bouterwek, p. 141. Heinsius observes that we must consider this poem as the most valuable record of German antiquity, but that to over-rate its merit, as some have been inclined to do, can be of no advantage.

by the name of Meister-singers, but are traced to the institutions of the twelfth century, called Singing-schools, for the promotion of popular music, the favourite recreation of Germany. What they may have done for music I am unable to say: it was in an evil hour for the art of poetry that they extended their jurisdiction over her. They regulated verse by the most pedantic and minute laws, such as a society with no idea of excellence but conformity to rule would be sure to adopt; though nobler institutions have often done the same, and the Master-burghers were but prototypes of the Italian academicians. The poetry was always moral and serious, but flat. These Meister-singers are said to have originated at Mentz, from which they spread to Augsburg, Strasburg, and other cities, and in none were more renowned than Nuremberg. Charles IV., in 1378, incorporated them by the name of Meistergenossenschaft, with armorial bearings and peculiar privileges. They became, however, more conspicuous in the sixteenth century; scarce any names of Meister-singers before that age are recorded; nor does it seem that much of their earlier poetry is extant.*

44. The French versifiers had by this time, perhaps, become less numerous, though several names in the same style of amatory song do some credit to their age. But the romances of chivalry began now to be written in prose; while a very celebrated poem, the Roman de la Rose, had in-

Poetry of
France and
Spain.

* Bouterwek, ix. 271—291. Folcz; and a good article in the Heinsius, iv. 85—98. See also Retrospective Review, vol. x. p. 113. the Biographie Universelle, art.

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roduced an unfortunate taste for allegory into verse, from which France did not extricate herself for several generations. Meanwhile, the Provençal poets, who, down to the close of the thirteenth century, had flourished in the south, and whose language many Lombards adopted, came to an end; after the re-union of the fief of Toulouse to the crown, and the possession of Provence by a northern line of princes, their ancient and renowned tongue passed for a dialect, a patois of the people. It had never been much employed in prose, save in the kingdom of Aragon, where, under the name of Valencian, it continued for two centuries to be a legitimate language, till political circumstances of the same kind reduced it, as in southern France, to a provincial dialect. The Castilian language, which, though it has been traced higher in written fragments, may be considered to have begun, in a literary sense, with the poem of the *Cid*, not later than the middle of the twelfth century, was employed by a few extant poets in the next two ages, and in the fourteenth was as much the established vehicle of many kinds of literature in Spain as the French was on the other side of the mountains.* The names of Por-

* Sanchez, *Collection de poesias Castellanas anteriores al siglo 15mo.* Velasquez, *Historia della poesia Español*; which I only know by the German translation of Dieze, (Gottingen, 1769,) who has added many notes. Andrès, *Origine d'ogni litteratura*, ii. 158. Bouterwek's *History of Spanish and Portuguese Literature*. I shall quote the English translation of

this work, which, I am sorry to say, is sold by the booksellers at scarce a third of its original price. It is a strange thing, that while we multiply encyclopædias and indifferent compilations of our own, there is no demand for translations from the most learned productions of Germany that will indemnify a publisher.

tuguese poets not less early than any in Castile are recorded; fragments are mentioned by Bouterwek as old as the twelfth century, and there exists a collection of lyric poetry in the style of the Troubadours, which is referred to no late part of the next age.* Nothing has been pub-

* This very curious fact in literary history has been brought to light by Lord Stuart of Rothesay, who printed at Paris, in 1823, twenty-five copies of a collection of ancient Portuguese songs, from a manuscript in the library of the College of Nobles at Lisbon. An account of this book by M. Raynouard, will be found in the *Journal des Savans* for August, 1825; and I have been favoured by my noble friend the editor with the loan of a copy; though my ignorance of the language prevented me from forming an exact judgment of its contents. In the preface the following circumstances are stated. It consists of seventy-five folios, the first part having been torn off, and the manuscript attached to a work of a wholly different nature. The writing appears to be of the fourteenth century, and in some places older. The idiom seems older than the writing: it may be called, if I understand the meaning of the preface, as old as the beginning of the thirteenth century, and certainly older than the reign of Denis, *pode appellidarse coevo do seculo xiii, e de certo he anterior ao reynado de D. Deniz*. Denis king of Portugal reigned from 1279 to 1325. It is regular in grammar, and for the most part in orthography; but contains some gallicisms, which show either a connection between France and Portugal in that age, or a common origin in the southern tongues of Europe; since certain idioms found in this manuscript are preserved in Spanish,

Italian, and Provençal, yet are omitted in Portuguese dictionaries. A few poems are translated from Provençal, but the greater part are strictly Portuguese, as the mention of places, names, and manners shows. M. Raynouard, however, observes, that 'the thoughts and forms of versification are similar to those of the Troubadours. The metres employed are usually of seven, eight, and ten syllables, the accent falling on the last; but some lines occur of seven, eight, or eleven syllables accented on the penultimate, and these are sometimes interwoven, at regular intervals, with the others.

The songs, as far as I was able to judge, are chiefly, if not wholly, amatory: they generally consist of stanzas, the first of which is written (and printed) with intervals for musical notes, and in the form of prose, though really in metre. Each stanza has frequently a burden of two lines. The plan appeared to be something like that of the Castilian glosas of the fifteenth century, the subject of the first stanza being repeated, and sometimes expanded, in the rest. I do not know that this is found in any Provençal poetry. The language, according to Raynouard, resembles Provençal more than the modern Portuguese does. It is a very remarkable circumstance, that we have no evidence, at least from the letter of the Marquis of Santillana early in the fifteenth century, that the Castilians had any of these love-songs till long

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I.Early Ita-
lian lan-
guage.

lished in the Castilian language of this amatory style older than 1400.

45. Italy came last of those countries where Latin had been spoken to the possession of an independent language and literature. No industry has hitherto retrieved so much as a few lines of real Italian till near the end of the twelfth century *; and there is not much before the middle of the next. Several poets, however, whose versification is not wholly rude, appeared soon afterwards. The Divine Comedy of Dante seems to have been commenced before his exile from Florence in 1304. The Italian language was much used in prose, during the times of Dante and Petrarch, though very little before.

Dante and
Petrarch.

46. Dante and Petrarch are, as it were, the morning stars of our modern literature. I shall say nothing more of the former in this place : he does not stand in such close connexion as Petrarch with the fifteenth century ; nor had he such influence over the taste of his age. In this respect Petrarch has as much the advantage over Dante, as he was his inferior in depth of thought and creative power. He formed a school of poetry, which,

after the date of this Cancioneiro; and that we may rather collect from it, that the Spanish amatory poets chose the Gallician or Portuguese dialect in preference to their own. Though the very ancient collection to which this note refers seems to have been unknown, I find mention of one by Don Pedro, Count of Barcelos, natural son of King Denis, in Dieze's notes on

Velasquez. *Gesch. der Span. Dichtkunst*, p. 70. This must have been in the first part of the fourteenth century.

* Tiraboschi, iii. 323., doubts the authenticity of some inscriptions referred to the twelfth century. The earliest genuine Italian seems to be a few lines by Ciullo d'Alcamo, a Sicilian, between 1187 and 1193, vol. iv. p. 340.

though no disciple comparable to himself came out of it, gave a character to the taste of his country. He did not invent the sonnet; but he, perhaps, was the cause that it has continued in fashion for so many ages.* He gave purity, elegance, and even stability to the Italian language, which has been incomparably less changed during near five centuries since his time, than it was in one between the age of Guido Guinizzelli and his own. And none have denied him the honour of having restored a true feeling of classical antiquity in Italy, and consequently in Europe.

47. Nothing can be more difficult, except by an arbitrary line, than to determine the commencement of the English language; not so much, as in those of the continent, because we are in want of materials, but rather from an opposite reason, the possibility of tracing a very gradual succession of verbal changes that ended in a change of denomination. We should probably experience a similar difficulty, if we knew equally well the current idiom of France or Italy in the seventh and eighth centuries. For when we compare the earliest English of the thirteenth century with the Anglo-Saxon of the twelfth, it seems hard to pronounce, why it should pass for a separate language, rather than a modification or simplification of the former. We must conform, however, to usage, and say that the Anglo-Saxon was converted into English: 1. by contracting or

Change of
Anglo-
Saxon to
English.

* Crescimbeni (*Storia della vulgar poesia*, vol. ii. p. 269.) asserts the claim of Guittone d'Arezzo to the invention of the regular sonnet, or at least the perfection of that in use among the Provençals.

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otherwise modifying the pronunciation and orthography of words; 2. by omitting many inflections, especially of the noun, and consequently making more use of articles and auxiliaries; 3. by the introduction of French derivatives; 4. by using less inversion and ellipsis, especially in poetry. Of these the second alone, I think, can be considered as sufficient to describe a new form of language; and this was brought about so gradually, that we are not relieved from much of our difficulty, whether some compositions shall pass for the latest offspring of the mother, or the earliest fruits of the daughter's fertility.*

48. The Anglo-Norman language is a phrase not quite so unobjectionable as the Anglo-Norman constitution; and as it is sure to deceive, we might better lay it aside altogether.† In the one instance, there was a real fusion of laws and government, to which we can find but a remote analogy, or rather none at all, in the other. It is probable, indeed, that the converse of foreigners might have something to do with those simplifica-

* It is a proof of this difficulty, that the best masters of our ancient language have lately introduced the word semi-Saxon, which is to cover every thing from 1150 to 1250. See Thorpe's preface to *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*, and many other recent books.

† A popular and pleasing writer has drawn a little upon his imagination in the following account of the language of our forefathers after the Conquest:—"The language of the church was Latin, that of the king and nobles, Norman; that of the people, Anglo-Saxon; *the Anglo-Norman jargon*

was only employed in the commercial intercourse between the conquerors and the conquered." Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Poets*, vol. i. p. 17. What was this jargon? and where do we find a proof of its existence? and what was the commercial intercourse hinted at? I suspect Ellis only meant, what has often been remarked, that the animals which bear a Saxon name in the fields acquire a French one in the shambles. But even this is more ingenious than just; for muttons, beeves, and porkers are good old words for the living quadrupeds.

tions of the Anglo-Saxon grammar, which appear about the reign of Henry II., more than a century after the Conquest; though it is also true, that languages of a very artificial structure, like that of England before that revolution, often became less complex in their forms, without any such violent process as an amalgamation of two different races.* What is commonly called the Saxon Chronicle is continued to the death of Stephen, in 1154, and in the same language, though with some loss of its purity. Besides the neglect of several grammatical rules, French words now and then obtrude themselves, but not very frequently, in the latter pages of this Chronicle. Peterborough, however, was quite an English monastery; its endowments, its abbots, were Saxon; and the political spirit the Chronicle breathes, in some passages, is that of the indignant subjects, *servi ancor frementi*, of the Norman usurpers. If its last compilers, therefore, gave way to some innovations of language, we may presume that these prevailed more extensively in places less secluded, and especially in London.

49. We find evidence of a greater change in Layamon, a translator of Wace's romance of Brut from the French. Layamon's age is uncertain; it must have been after 1155, when the original poem was completed, and can hardly be placed below 1200. His language is accounted rather Anglo-Saxon than English; it retains most of the distinguishing inflections of the mother-tongue, yet

* "Every branch of the low German stock from whence the Anglo-Saxon sprung, displays the same simplification of its gram-

mar." Price's Preface to Warton, p. 110. He therefore ascribes little influence to the Norman conquest or to French connexions.

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evidently differs considerably from that older than the Conquest by the introduction, or at least more frequent employment of some new auxiliary forms, and displays very little of the characteristics of the ancient poetry, its periphrases, its ellipses, or its inversions. But though translation was the means by which words of French origin were afterwards most copiously introduced, very few occur in the extracts from Layamon hitherto published; for we have not yet the expected edition of the entire work. He is not a mere translator, but improves much on Wace. The adoption of the plain and almost creeping style of the metrical French romance, instead of the impetuous dithyrambics of Saxon song, gives Layamon at first sight a greater affinity to the new English language than in mere grammatical structure he appears to bear.*

Progress of
English
language.

50. Layamon wrote in a monastery on the Severn; and it is agreeable to experience, that an obsolete structure of language should be retained in a distant province, while it has undergone some change among the less rugged inhabitants of a capital. The disuse of Saxon names crept on by degrees; some metrical lives of saints, apparently written not far from the year 1250†, may be deemed

* See a long extract from Layamon in Ellis's Specimens. This writer observes, that "it contains no word which we are under the necessity of referring to a French root." *Duke and Castle* seem exceptions; but the latter word occurs in the Saxon Chronicle before the Conquest, A. D. 1052.

† Ritson's Dissertat. on Romance. Madden's Introduction to Havelok. Notes of Price, in his

edition of Warton. Warton himself is of no authority in this matter. Price inclines to put most of the poems quoted by Warton near the close of the thirteenth century.

It should here be observed, that the language underwent its metamorphosis into English by much less rapid gradations in some parts of the kingdom than in others. Not only the popular dialect of

English ; but the first specimen of it that bears a precise date is a proclamation of Henry III., addressed to the people of Huntingdonshire in 1258, but doubtless circular throughout England.* A triumphant song, composed probably in London, on the victory obtained at Lewes, by the confederate barons in 1264, and the capture of Richard Earl of Cornwall, is rather less obsolete in its style than this proclamation, as might naturally be expected. It could not have been written later than that year, because in the next the tables were turned on those who now exulted, by the complete discomfiture of their party in the battle of Evesham. Several pieces of poetry, uncertain as to their precise date, must be referred to the latter part of this century. Robert of Gloucester, after the year 1297, since he alludes to the canonisation of St. Louis †, turned the chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth into English verse ; and on comparing him with Layamon, a native of the same county,

many counties, especially in the north, retained long, and still retains, a larger proportion of the Anglo-Saxon peculiarities, but we have evidence that they were not every where disused in writing. A manuscript in the Kentish dialect, if that phrase is correct, bearing the date of 1340, is more Anglo-Saxon than any of the poems ascribed to the thirteenth century, which we read in Warton, such as the legends of saints or the *Ormulum*. This very curious fact was first made known to the public by Mr. Thorpe, in his translation of *Cædmon*, preface, p. xii.; and an account of the manuscript

itself, rather fuller than that of Mr. T., has since been given in the catalogue of the Arundel MSS. in the British Museum.

* Henry's *Hist. of Britain*, vol. viii., appendix. "Between 1244 and 1258," says Sir F. Madden, "we know, was written the versification of part of a meditation of St. Augustine, as proved by the age of the prior, who gave the manuscript to the Durham library," p. 49. This, therefore, will be strictly the oldest piece of English, to the date of which we can approach by more than conjecture.

† Madden's *Havelok*, p. 52.

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and a writer on the same subject, it will appear that a great quantity of French had flowed into the language since the loss of Normandy. The Anglo-Saxon inflections, terminations, and orthography, had also undergone a very considerable change. That the intermixture of French words was very slightly owing to the Norman conquest will appear probable, by observing at least as frequent an use of them in the earliest specimens of the Scottish dialect, especially a song on the death of Alexander III. in 1285. There is a good deal of French in this, not borrowed, probably, from England, but directly from the original sources of imitation.

English of
the four-
teenth cen-
tury.
Chaucer.
Gower.

51. The fourteenth century was not unproductive of men, both English and Scots, gifted with the powers of poetry. Laurence Minot, an author unknown to Warton, but whose poems on the wars of Edward III. are referred by their publisher Ritson to 1352, is perhaps the first original poet in our language that has survived ; since such of his predecessors as are now known appear to have been merely translators, or at best amplifiers of a French or Latin original. The earliest historical or epic narrative is due to John Barbour, archdeacon of Aberdeen, whose long poem in the Scots dialect, *The Bruce*, commemorating the deliverance of his country, seems to have been completed in 1373. But our greatest poet of the middle ages, beyond comparison, was Geoffrey Chaucer ; and I do not know that any other country, except Italy, produced one of equal variety in invention, acuteness in observation, or felicity of expression. A vast interval must be made between

Chaucer and any other English poet ; yet Gower, his contemporary, though not, like him, a poet of nature's growth, had some effect in rendering the language less rude, and exciting a taste for verse ; if he never rises, he never sinks low ; he is always sensible, polished, perspicuous, and not prosaic in the worst sense of the word. Longlands, the supposed author of *Piers Plowman's Vision*, with far more imaginative vigour, has a more obsolete and unrefined diction.

52. The French language was spoken by the superior classes of society in England from the conquest to the reign of Edward III. ; though it seems probable that they were generally acquainted with English, at least in the latter part of that period. But all letters, even of a private nature, were written in Latin till the beginning of the reign of Edward I., soon after 1270, when a sudden change brought in the use of French.* In grammar schools boys were made to construe their Latin into French ; and in the statutes of Oriel College, Oxford, we find, in a regulation so late as 1328, that the students shall converse together, if not in Latin, at least in French.† The minutes of the corporation of London, recorded in the Town Clerk's office, were in French, as well as the proceedings in parliament, and in the courts of justice ; and oral discussions were perhaps carried on in the same language, though this is not a necessary con-

General
disuse of
French in
England.

* I am indebted for this fact, which I have ventured to generalise, to the communication of Mr. Stevenson, sub-commissioner of public records.

† Si qua inter se proferant, colloquio Latino vel saltem Gallico perfruantur. Warton, i. 6. In Merton College statutes, given in 1271, Latin alone is prescribed.

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sequence. Hence the English was seldom written, and hardly employed in prose till after the middle of the fourteenth century. Sir John Mandeville's travels were written in 1356. This is our earliest English book. Wicliffe's translation of the Bible, a great work that enriched the language, is referred to 1383, Trevisa's version of the Polychronicon of Higden was in 1385, and the Astrolabe of Chaucer in 1392. A few public instruments were drawn up in English under Richard II.; and about the same time, probably, it began to be employed in epistolary correspondence of a private nature. Trevisa informs us, that, when he wrote (1385), even gentlemen had much left off to have their children taught French, and names the school-master (John Cornwall) who soon after 1350 brought in so great an innovation as the making his boys read Latin into English.* This change from the common use of French in the upper ranks seems to have taken place as rapidly as a similar revolution has lately done in Germany. By a statute of 1362, (36 E. 3. c. 15.) all pleas in courts of justice are directed to be pleaded and judged in English, on account of French being so much unknown. But the laws, and, generally speaking, the records of parliament, continued to be in the latter language for many years; and we learn from Sir John Fortescue, a hundred years afterwards, that this statute itself was but partially enforced.† The French language, if we take his

* The passage may be found quoted in Warton, *ubi supra*, or in many other books.

† "In the courts of justice they formerly used to plead in French, till, in pursuance of a law to that

words literally, even in the reign of Edward IV., was spoken in affairs of mercantile account, and in many games, the vocabulary of both being chiefly derived from it.*

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53. Thus by the year 1400, we find a national literature subsisting in seven European languages, three spoken in the Spanish peninsula, the French, the Italian, the German, and the English; from which last, the Scots dialect need not be distinguished. Of these the Italian was the most polished, and had to boast of the greatest writers; the French excelled in their number and variety. Our own tongue, though it had latterly acquired much copiousness in the hands of Chaucer and Wicliffe, both of whom lavishly supplied it with words of French and Latin derivation, was but just growing into a literary existence. The German, as well as that of Valencia, seemed to decline. The former became more precise, more abstract, more intellectual (*geistlich*), and less sensible (*sinnlich*), (to use the words of Eichhorn), and of consequence less fit for poetry; it fell into the hands of lawyers and mystical theologians. The earliest German prose, a few very ancient fragments excepted, is the collection of Saxon laws (*Sachsenspiegel*), about the middle of the thirteenth century; the next the Swabian collection (*Schwabenspiegel*), about 1282.†

State of
European
languages
about 1400.

purpose, that custom was *somewhat restrained*, but not hitherto quite disused, de Laudibus Legum Angliæ, c. xlviij. I quote from Waterhouse's translation; but the Latin runs *quam plurimum restrictus est*.

* Ibid.

† Bouterwek, p. 163. There are some novels at the end of the thirteenth, or beginning of the fourteenth, century. Ibid.

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But these forming hardly a part of literature, though Bouterwek praises passages of the latter for religious eloquence, we may deem John Tauler, a Dominican friar of Strasburg, whose influence in propagating what was called the mystical theology gave a new tone to his country, to be the first German writer in prose. "Tauler," says a modern historian of literature, "in his German sermons, mingled many expressions invented by himself, which were the first attempt at a philosophical language, and displayed surprising eloquence for the age wherein he lived. It may be justly said of him that he first gave to prose that direction in which Luther afterwards advanced so far."* Tauler died in 1361. Meantime, as has been said before, the nobility abandoned their love of verse, which the burghers took up diligently, but with little spirit or genius; the common language became barbarous and neglected, of which the strange fashion of writing half Latin, half German, verses, is a proof.† This had been common in the darker ages: we have several instances of it in Anglo-Saxon; but it was late to adopt it in the fourteenth century.

Ignorance
of reading
and writing
in darker
ages.

54. The Latin writers of the middle ages were chiefly ecclesiastics. But of these in the living tongues a large proportion were laymen. They knew, therefore, how to commit their thoughts to writing; and hence the ignorance characteristic of the darker ages must seem to be passing away. This, however, is a very difficult, though interesting question, when we come to look nearly at the

* Heinsius, iv. 76.

† Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch., i. 240.

gradual progress of rudimentary knowledge. I can offer but an outline, which those who turn more of their attention towards the subject will be enabled to correct and supply. Before the end of the eleventh century, and especially after the ninth, it was rare to find laymen in France who could read and write.* The case was probably not better any where else, except in Italy. I should incline to except Italy, on the authority of a passage in Wippo, a German writer soon after the year 1000, who exhorts the Emperor Henry II. to cause the sons of the nobility to be instructed in letters, using the example of the Italians, with whom, according to him, it was a universal practice.† The word clerks or clergymen became in this and other countries synonymous with one who could write or even read; we all know the original meaning of benefit of clergy, and the test by which it was claimed. Yet from about the end of the eleventh, or at least of the twelfth century, many circumstances may lead us to believe that it was less and

* Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 2. Some nobles sent their children to be educated in the schools of Charlemagne, especially those of Germany, under Raban, Notker, Bruno, and other distinguished abbots. But they were generally destined for the church. Meiners, ii. 377. The signatures of laymen are often found to deeds of the eighth century, and sometimes of the ninth. Nouv. Traité de la Diplomatique, ii. 422. The ignorance of the laity, according to this authority, was not strictly parallel to that of the church.

† Tunc fac edictum per terram Teutonicorum

Quilibet ut dives sibi natos
instruat omnes
Litterulis, legemque suam per-
suadeat illis,
Ut cum principibus placitandi
venerit usus,
Quisque suis libris exemplum
proferat illis.
Moribus his dudum vivebat
Roma decenter,
His studiis tantos potuit vincere
tyrannos.
Hoc servant Itali post prima cre-
pundia cuncti.

I am indebted for this quotation to Meiners, ii. 344.

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less a conclusive test, and that the laity came more and more into possession of the simple elements of literature.

Reasons
for sup-
posing this
to have
diminished
after 1100.

55. I. It will of course be admitted that all who administered or belonged to the Roman law were masters of reading and writing, though we do not find that they were generally ecclesiastics, even in the lowest sense of the word, by receiving the tonsure. Some indeed were such. In countries where the feudal law had passed from unwritten custom to record and precedent, and had grown into as much subtlety by diffuseness as the Roman, which was the case of England from the time of Henry II., the lawyers, though laymen, were unquestionably clerks or learned. II. The convenience of such elementary knowledge to merchants, who, both in the Mediterranean and in these parts of Europe, carried on a good deal of foreign commerce, and indeed to all traders, may render it probable that they were not destitute of it; though it must be confessed that the word clerk rather seems to denote that this deficiency was supplied by those employed under them. I do not, however, conceive that the clerks of citizens were ecclesiastics.* III. If we could rely on a passage in Ingulfus, the practice in grammar schools of construing Latin into French was as old as the reign of the Conqueror†; and it seems unlikely

* The earliest recorded bills of exchange, according to Beckmann, *Hist. of Inventions*, iii. 430., are in a passage of the jurist Baldus, and bear date in 1328. But they were by no means in common

till the next century. I do not mention this as bearing much on the subject of the text.

† Et pueris etiam in scholis principia literarum Gallicè et non Anglice traderentur.

that this should have been confined to children educated for the English church. IV. The poets of the north and south of France were often men of princely or noble birth, sometimes ladies; their versification is far too artificial to be deemed the rude product of an illiterate mind; and to these, whose capacity of holding the pen few will dispute, we must surely add a numerous class of readers, for whom their poetry was designed. It may be surmised, that the itinerant minstrels answered this end, and supplied the ignorance of the nobility. But many ditties of the troubadours were not so well adapted to the minstrels, who seem to have dealt more with metrical romances. Nor do I doubt that these also were read in many a castle of France and Germany. I will not dwell on the story of Francesca of Rimini, because no one, perhaps, is likely to dispute that a Romagnol lady in the age of Dante would be able to read the tale of Lancelot. But that romance had long been written; and other ladies doubtless had read it, and possibly had left off reading it in similar circumstances, and as little to their advantage. The fourteenth century abounded with books in French prose; the extant copies of some are not very few; but no argument against their circulation could be urged from their scarcity in the present day. It is not of course pretended that they were diffused as extensively as printed books have been. V. The fashion of writing private letters in French instead of Latin, which, as has been mentioned, came in among us soon after 1270, affords perhaps a pre-

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sumption that they were written in a language intelligible to the correspondent, because he had no longer occasion for assistance in reading them ; though they were still generally from the hand of a secretary. But at what time this disuse of Latin began on the Continent I cannot exactly determine. The French and Castilians, I believe, made general use of their own languages in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

Increased
knowledge
of writing
in four-
teenth
century.

56. The art of reading does not imply that of writing ; it seems likely that the one prevailed before the other. The latter was difficult to acquire, in consequence of the regularity of characters preserved by the clerks, and their complex system of abbreviations, which rendered the cursive hand-writing, introduced about the end of the eleventh century, almost as operose to those who had not much experience of it as the more stiff characters of older manuscripts. It certainly appears that even autograph signatures are not found till a late period. Philip the Bold, who ascended the French throne in 1272, could not write, though this is not the case with any of his successors. I do not know that equal ignorance is recorded of any English sovereign, though we have I think only a series of autographs beginning with Richard II. It is said by the authors of *Nouveau Traité de la Diplomatie*, Benedictines of laborious and exact erudition, that the art of writing had become rather common among the laity of France before the end of the thirteenth century : out of eight witnesses to a testament in 1277 five could write their names ; at the be-

ginning of that age, it is probable, they think, that not one could have done so.* Signatures to deeds of private persons, however, do not begin to appear till the fourteenth, and were not in established use in France till about the middle of the fifteenth, century.† Indorsements upon English deeds, as well as mere signatures, by laymen of rank, bearing date in the reign of Edward II., are in existence; and there is an English letter from the lady of Sir John Pelham to her husband in 1399, which is probably one of the earliest instances of female penmanship. By the badness of the grammar we may presume it to be her own.‡

* Vol. ii. p. 423.

† Ibid. p. 434. et post.

‡ I am indebted for a knowledge of this letter to the Rev. Joseph Hunter, who recollected to have seen it in an old edition of Collins's *Peerage*. Later editions have omitted it as an unimportant redundancy, though interesting even for its contents, independently of the value it acquires from the language. On account of its scarcity, being only found in old editions now not in request, I shall insert it here; and till any thing else shall prefer a claim, it may pass for the oldest private letter in the English language. I have not kept the orthography, but have left several incoherent and ungrammatical phrases as they stand. It was copied by Collins from the archives of the Newcastle family.

My dear Lord,

I recommend me to your high lordship with heart and body and all my poor might, and with all this I thank you as my dear lord dearest and best beloved of all

earthly lords I say for me, and thank you my dear lord with all this that I say before of your comfortable letter that ye sent me from Pontefract that come to me on Mary Magdalene day; for by my troth I was never so glad as when I heard by your letter that ye were strong enough with the grace of God for to keep you from the malice of your enemies. And dear Lord if it like to your high lordship that as soon as ye might that I might hear of your gracious speed; which as God Almighty continue and increase. And my dear lord if it like you for to know of my fare, I am here by laid in manner of a siege with the county of Sussex, Surrey, and a great parcel of Kent, so that I may nought out no none victuals get me but with much hard. Wherefore my dear if it like you by the advice of your wise counsel for to get remedy of the salvation of your castle and withstand the malice of the shires aforesaid. And also that ye be fully informed of their great malice workers in these shires

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I.

Average
state of
knowledge
in England.

57. Laymen, among whom Chaucer and Gower are illustrious examples, received occasionally a learned education ; and indeed the great number of gentlemen who studied in the inns of court is a conclusive proof that they were not generally illiterate. The common law required some knowledge of two languages. Upon the whole we may be inclined to think, that in the year 1400, or at the accession of Henry IV., the average instruction of an English gentleman of the first class would comprehend common reading and writing, a tolerable familiarity with French, and a slight tincture of Latin ; the latter retained or not, according to his circumstances and character, as school learning is at present. This may be rather a favourable statement ; but after another generation it might be assumed, as we shall see, with more confidence as a fair one.*

Invention
of paper.

58. A demand for instruction in the art of writing would increase with the frequency of epistolary correspondence, which, where of a private or secret nature, no one would gladly conduct by the in-

which that haves so despitefully wrought to you, and to your castle, to your men, and to your tenants for this country have yai [sic] wasted for a great while. Farewell my dear lord, the Holy Trinity you keep from your enemies, and ever send me good tidings of you. Written at Pevensey in the castle on St. Jacob day last past,

By your own poor

J. PELHAM.

To my true Lord.

* It might be inferred from a passage in Richard of Bury, about 1343, that none but ecclesiastics could read at all. He deprecates the putting of books into the hands of *laici*, who do not know one side from another. And in several places it seems that he thought they were meant for "the tonsured" alone. But a great change took place in the ensuing half century ; and I do not believe he can be construed strictly even as to his own time.

tervention of a secretary. Better education, more refined manners, a closer intercourse of social life, were the primary causes of this increase in private correspondence. But it was greatly facilitated by the invention, or, rather, extended use, of paper as the vehicle of writing instead of parchment; a revolution, as it may be called, of high importance, without which both the art of writing would have been much less practised, and the invention of printing less serviceable to mankind. After the subjugation of Egypt by the Saracens, the importation of the papyrus, previously in general use, came in no long time to an end; so that, though down to the end of the seventh century all instruments in France were written upon it, we find its place afterwards supplied by parchment; and under the house of Charlemagne, there is hardly an instrument upon any other material.* Parchment, however, a much more durable and useful vehicle than papyrus†, was expensive, and its cost not only excluded the necessary waste which a free use of writing requires, but gave rise to the unfortunate practice of erasing manuscripts in order to replace them with some new matter. This was carried to a great extent, and has occasioned the loss of precious monuments of anti-

* Montfaucon, in *Acad. des Inscript.*, vol. vi. But Muratori says that the papyrus was little used in the seventh century, though writings on it may be found as late as the tenth, *Dissert.* xliii. This dissertation relates to the condition of letters in Italy as far as the year 1100; as the xliivth does to their subsequent history.

† Heeren justly remarks (I do not know that others have done the same), of how great importance the introduction of parchment, to which, and afterwards to paper, the old perishable papyraceous manuscripts were transferred, has been to the preservation of literature. P. 74.

CHAP.
I.Linen
paper,
when first
used.Cotton
paper.

quity, as is now demonstrated by instances of their restoration.

59. The date of the invention of our present paper, manufactured from linen rags, or of its introduction into Europe, has long been the subject of controversy. That paper made from cotton was in use sooner, is admitted on all sides. Some charters written upon that kind not later than the tenth century were seen by Montfaucon; and it is even said to be found in papal bulls of the ninth.* The Greeks, however, from whom the west of Europe is conceived to have borrowed this sort of paper, did not much employ it in manuscript books, according to Montfaucon, till the twelfth century, from which time it came into frequent use among them. Muratori had seen no writing upon this material older than 1100, though, in deference to Montfaucon, he admits its employment earlier.† It certainly was not greatly used in Italy before the thirteenth century. Among the Saracens of Spain, on the other hand, as well as those of the East, it was of much greater antiquity. The Greeks called it *charta Damascena*, having been manufactured or sold in the city of Damascus. And Casiri, in his catalogue of the Arabic manuscripts in the Escorial, desires us to understand that they are written on paper of cotton or linen, but generally the latter, unless the contrary be expressed.‡ Many in this catalogue

* Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions, vi. 604. Nouveau Traité de Diplomatique, i. 517. Savigny. Gesch. des Römischen Rechts, iii. 534.

† Dissert., xliii.

‡ *Materiæ, nisi membraneus sit codex, nulla mentio: cæteros bombycinos, ac, maximam partem, chartaceos esse colligas. Præfatio, p. 7.*

were written before the thirteenth, or even the twelfth century.

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I.

60. This will lead us to the more disputed question as to the antiquity of linen paper. The earliest distinct instance I have found, and which I believe has hitherto been overlooked, is an Arabic version of the aphorisms of Hippocrates, the manuscript bearing the date of 1100. This Casiri observes to be on linen paper, not as in itself remarkable, but as accounting for its injury by wet. It does not appear whether it were written in Spain, or, like many in that catalogue, brought from Egypt or the East.*

Linen
paper as old
as 1100.

61. The authority of Casiri must confirm beyond doubt a passage in Peter Abbot of Clugni, which has perplexed those who place the invention of linen paper very low. In a treatise against the Jews, he speaks of books, *ex pellibus arietum, hircorum, vel vitulorum, sive ex biblis vel juncis Orientalium paludum, aut ex rasuris veterum pannorum, seu ex aliâ qualibet forte viliore materia compactos*. A late English writer contends that nothing can be meant by the last words, "unless that all sorts of inferior substances capable of being so applied, among them, perhaps, hemp and the remains of cordage, were used at this period in the manufacture of paper."† It certainly at least seems reasonable to interpret the words "*ex rasuris veterum pannorum*," of linen rags; and when I add that Peter Cluniacensis passed a con-

Known to
Peter of
Clugni,

* Casiri, N. 787. Codex anno Christi 1100, chartaceus, &c. manuscript of Aratus, by Mr. Ottley, in *Archæologia*, vol. xxvi.

† See a memoir on an ancient

CHAP.
I.

siderable time in Spain about 1141, there can remain, it seems, no rational doubt that the Saracens of the peninsula were acquainted with that species of paper, though perhaps it was as yet unknown in every other country.

And in
12th and
13th cen-
turies.

62. Andrès asserts, on the authority of the *Memoirs of the Academy of Barcelona*, that a treaty between the kings of Aragon and Castile, bearing the date of 1178, and written upon linen paper, is extant in the archives of that city.* He alleges several other instances in the next age; when Mabillon, who denies that paper of linen was then used in charters, which, indeed, no one is likely to maintain, mentions, as the earliest specimen he had seen in France, a letter of Joinville to St. Louis, which must be older than 1270. Andrès refers the invention to the Saracens of Spain, using the fine flax of Valencia and Murcia; and conjectures that it was brought into use among the Spaniards themselves by Alfonso of Castile.†

Paper of
mixed
materials.

63. In the opinion of the English writer to whom we have above referred, paper, from a very early period, was manufactured of mixed materials, which have sometimes been erroneously taken for pure cotton. We have in the Tower of London a letter addressed to Henry III. by Raymond, son of Raymond VI., Count of Toulouse, and consequently between 1216 and 1222, when the latter

* Vol. ii. p. 73. Andrès has gone much at length into this subject, and has collected several important passages which do not appear in my text. The letter of Joinville has been supposed to be addressed to Louis Hutin in 1314,

but this seems inconsistent with the writer's age.

† Id. p. 84. He cannot mean that it was never employed before Alfonso's time, of which he has already given instances.

died, upon very strong paper, and certainly made, in Mr. Ottley's judgment, of mixed materials; while in several of the time of Edward I., written upon genuine cotton paper of no great thickness, the fibres of cotton present themselves every where at the backs of the letters so distinctly that they seem as if they might even now be spun into thread.*

64. Notwithstanding this last statement, which I must confirm by my own observation, and of which no one can doubt who has looked at the letters themselves, several writers of high authority, such as Tiraboschi and Savigny, persist not only in fixing the invention of linen paper very low, even after the middle of the fourteenth century, but in maintaining that it is undistinguishable from that made of cotton, except by the eye of a manufacturer.† Were this indeed true, it would be sufficient for the purpose we have here in view, which is not to trace the origin of a particular discovery, but the employment of a useful vehicle of writing. If it be true that cotton paper was fabricated in Italy of so good a texture that it cannot be discerned from linen, it must be considered as of

Invention
of paper
placed by
some too
low.

* Archæologia, *ibid.* I may however observe, that a gentleman as experienced as Mr. Ottley himself, inclines to think the letter of Raymond written on paper wholly made of cotton, though of better manufacture than usual.

† Tiraboschi, v. 85. Savigny, *Gesch. des Römischen Rechts*, iii. 534. He relies on a book I have not seen, Wehrs vom Papier. Hall, 1789. This writer, it is said, contends that the words of Peter of Clugny, *ex rasuris veterum pannorum*, means cotton paper.

Heeren, p. 208. Lambinet, on the other hand, translates them, without hesitation, "*chiffons de linge.*" *Hist. de l'Origine de l'Imprimerie*, i. 93.

Andrès has pointed out, p. 70., that Maffei merely says he has seen no paper of linen earlier than 1300, and no instrument on that material older than one of 1367, which he found among his own family deeds. Tiraboschi, overlooking this distinction, quotes Maffei for his own opinion as to the lateness of the invention.

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I.

equal utility. It is not the case with the letters on cotton paper in our English repositories; most, if not all, of which were written in France or Spain. But I have seen in the Chapter House at Westminster a letter written from Gascony about 1315, to Hugh Despencer, upon thin paper, to all appearance made like that now in use, and with a water mark. Several others of a similar appearance, in the same repository, are of rather later time. There is also one in the King's Remembrancer's Office of the 11th of Edward III. (1337 or 1338), containing the accounts of the King's ambassadors to the count of Holland, and probably written in that country. This paper has a water mark, and if it is not of linen, is at least not easily distinguishable. Bullet declares that he saw at Besançon a deed of 1302 on linen paper: several are alleged to exist in Germany before the middle of the century; and Lambinet mentions, though but on the authority of a periodical publication, a register of expenses from 1323 to 1354, found in a church at Caen, written on two hundred and eight sheets of that substance.* One of the Cottonian manuscripts (Galba, B. I.) is called *Codex Chartaceus* in the catalogue. It contains a long series of public letters, chiefly written in the Netherlands, from an early part of the reign of Edward III. to that of Henry IV. But upon examination I find the title not quite accurate; several letters, and especially the earliest, are written on parchment, and paper does not appear at soonest till

* Lambinet, *ubi supra*.

near the end of Edward's reign.* Sir Henry Ellis has said that "very few instances indeed occur before the fifteenth century of letters written upon paper."† The use of cotton paper was by no means general, or even, I believe, frequent, except in Spain and Italy, perhaps also in the south of France. Nor was it much employed even in Italy for books. Savigny tells us there are few manuscripts of law books among the multitude that exist which are not written on parchment.

65. It will be manifest from what has been said how greatly Robertson has been mistaken in his position, that "in the eleventh century the art of making paper, in the manner now become universal, was invented, by means of which not only the number of manuscripts increased but the study of the sciences was wonderfully facilitated."‡ Even Ginguéné, better informed on such subjects than Robertson, has intimated something of the same kind. But paper, whenever or wherever invented, was very sparingly used, and especially in manuscript books, among the French, Germans, or English, or linen paper, even among the Italians, till near the close of the period which this chapter comprehends. Upon the "study of the sciences" it could as yet have had very little effect. The vast importance of the invention was just beginning

Not at first
very im-
portant.

* Andress, p. 68., mentions a note written in 1342, in the Cotton library, as the earliest English specimen of linen paper. I do not know to what this refers; in the above-mentioned Codex Charta-

ceus is a letter of 1341, but it is on parchment.

† Ellis's *Original Letters*, i. 1.

‡ Hist. of Charles V. vol. i. note 10. Heeren inclines to the same opinion, p. 200.

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I.

to be discovered. It is to be added, as a remarkable circumstance, that the earliest linen paper was of very good manufacture, strong and handsome, though perhaps too much like card for general convenience; and every one is aware that the first printed books are frequently beautiful in the quality of their paper.

Importance
of legal
studies.

66. III. The application of general principles of justice to the infinitely various circumstances which may arise in the disputes of men with each other is in itself an admirable discipline of the moral and intellectual faculties. Even where the primary rules of right and policy have been obscured in some measure by a technical and arbitrary system, which is apt to grow up, perhaps inevitably, in the course of civilisation, the mind gains in precision and acuteness, though at the expense of some important qualities; and a people wherein an artificial jurisprudence is cultivated, requiring both a regard to written authority, and the constant exercise of a discriminating judgment upon words, must be deemed to be emerging from ignorance. Such was the condition of Europe in the twelfth century. The feudal customs, long unwritten, though latterly become more steady by tradition, were in some countries reduced into treatises: we have our own Glanvil in the reign of Henry II., and in the next century much was written upon the national laws in various parts of Europe. Upon these it is not my intention to dwell; but the importance of the civil law in its connection with ancient learning, as well as with moral and political science, renders it deserving of a place in any

general account either of mediæval or modern literature.

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I.

67. That the Roman laws, such as they subsisted in the western empire at the time of its dismemberment in the fifth century, were received in the new kingdoms of the Gothic, Lombard, and Carolingian dynasties, as the rule of those who by birth and choice submitted to them, was shown by Muratori and other writers of the last century. This subject has received additional illustration from the acute and laborious Savigny, who has succeeded in tracing sufficient evidence of what had been, in fact, stated by Muratori, that not only an abridgment of the Theodosian code, but that of Justinian, and even the Pandects, were known in different parts of Europe long before the epoch formerly assigned for the restoration of that jurisprudence.* The popular story, already much discredited, that the famous copy of the Pandects, now in the Laurentian library at Florence, was brought to Pisa from Amalfi, after the capture of that city by Roger king of Sicily with the aid of a Pisan fleet in 1135, and became the means of diffusing an acquaintance with that portion of the law through Italy, is shown by him not only to rest on very slight evidence, but to be unquestionably, in the latter and more important circumstance, destitute of all foundation.† It is still indeed an undetermined question whether other

Roman
laws never
wholly un-
known.

* It can be no disparagement to Savigny, who does not claim perfect originality, to say that Muratori, in his 44th dissertation, gives several instances of quotations

from the Pandects in writers older than the capture of Amalfi.

† Savigny, *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts in mittel alter*, iii. 83.

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existing manuscripts of the Pandects are not derived from this illustrious copy, which alone contains the entire fifty books, and which has been preserved with a traditional veneration indicating some superiority; but Savigny has shown, that Peter of Valence, a jurist of the eleventh century, made use of an independent manuscript; and it is certain that the Pandects were the subject of legal studies before the siege of Amalfi.

Irnerius,—
his first
successors.

68. Irnerius, by universal testimony, was the founder of all learned investigation into the laws of Justinian. He gave lectures upon them at Bologna his native city, not long, in Savigny's opinion, after the commencement of the century.* And besides this oral instruction, he began the practice of making glosses, or short marginal explanations, on the law books, with the whole of which he was acquainted. We owe also to him, according to ancient opinion, though much controverted in later times, an epitome, called the Authentica, of what Gravina calls the prolix and difficult (*salebrosis atque garrulis*) Novels of Justinian, arranged according to the titles of the Code. The most eminent successors of this restorer of the Roman law during the same century were Martinus Gosias, Bulgarus, and Placentinus. They were, however, but a few among many interpreters, whose glosses have been partly though very imperfectly preserved. The love of equal liberty and just laws in the Italian cities rendered the profession of jurisprudence exceedingly honourable; the doctors of

* Vol. iv. p. 16. Some have erroneously thought Irnerius a German.

Bologna and other universities were frequently called to the office of podestà, or criminal judge, in these small republics; in Bologna itself they were officially members of the smaller or secret council; and their opinions, which they did not render gratuitously, were sought with the respect that had been shown at Rome to their ancient masters of the age of Severus.

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I.

69. A gloss, *γλωσσα*, properly meant a word from a foreign language, or an obsolete or poetical word, or whatever requires interpretation. It was afterwards used for the interpretation itself; and this sense, which is not strictly classical, may be found in Isidore, though some have imagined Irnerius himself to have first employed it.* In the twelfth century, it was extended from a single word to an entire expository sentence. The first glosses were interlinear; they were afterwards placed in the margin, and extended finally in some instances to a sort of running commentary on an entire book. These were called an Apparatus.†

Their
glosses.

70. Besides these glosses on obscure passages, some lawyers attempted to abridge the body of the law. Placentinus wrote a summary of the Code and Institutes. But this was held inferior to that of Azo, which appeared before 1220. Hugolinus gave a similar abridgment of the Pandects. About the same time, or a little after, a scholar of Azo, Accursius of Florence, undertook his celebrated work, a collection of the glosses, which, in the

Abride-
ments of
law.
Accursius's
Corpus
Glossatum.

* Alcuin defines glossa, "unius verbi vel nominis interpretatio. Duncange, præfat. in Glossar., p. 38.

† Savigny, iii. 519.

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I.

century that had elapsed since the time of Irnerius, had grown to an enormous extent, and were of course not always consistent. He has inserted little, probably, of his own, but exercised a judgment, not perhaps a very enlightened one, in the selection of his authorities. Thus was compiled his *Corpus Juris Glossatum*, commonly called *Glossa*, or *Glossa Ordinaria*: a work, says Eichhorn, as remarkable for its barbarous style and gross mistakes in history as for the solidity of its judgments and practical distinctions. Gravina, after extolling the conciseness, acuteness, skill, and diligence in comparing remote passages, and in reconciling apparent inconsistencies, which distinguished Accursius, remarks the injustice of some moderns, who reproach his work with the ignorance inevitable in his age, and seem to think the chance of birth which has thrown them into more enlightened times, a part of their personal merit.*

Character
of early
jurists.

71. Savigny has taken still higher ground in his admiration, as we may call it, of the early jurists, those from the appearance of Irnerius to the publication of the Accursian body of glosses. For the execution of this work indeed he testifies no very high respect; Accursius did not sufficient justice to his predecessors; and many of the most valuable glosses are still buried in the dust of unpublished manuscripts.† But the men themselves deserve our highest praise. The school of Irnerius rose suddenly; for in earlier writers we find no intelligent use, or critical interpretation, of the passages

* *Origines Juris*, p. 184.

† Vol. v. pp. 258—267.

they cite. To reflect upon every text, to compare it with every clause or word that might illustrate its meaning in the somewhat chaotic mass of the Pandects and Code, was reserved for these acute and diligent investigators. "Interpretation," says Savigny, "was considered the first and most important object of glossers, as it was of oral instructors. By an unintermitting use of the original law-books, they obtained that full and lively acquaintance with their contents, which enabled them to compare different passages with the utmost acuteness, and with much success. It may be reckoned a characteristic merit of many glossers, that they keep the attention always fixed on the immediate subject of explanation, and, in the richest display of comparisons with other passages of the law, never deviate from their point into any thing too indefinite and general; superior often in this to the most learned interpreters of the French and Dutch schools, and capable of giving a lesson even to ourselves. Nor did the glossers by any means slight the importance of laying a sound critical basis for interpretation, but on the contrary laboured earnestly in the recension and correction of the text."*

72. These warm eulogies afford us an instance, to which there are many parallels, of such vicissitudes in literary reputation, that the wheel of fame, like that of fortune, seems never to be at rest. For a long time, it had been the fashion to speak in slighting terms of these early jurists; and the

* Vol. v. pp. 199—211.

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1.

passage above quoted from Gravina is in a much more candid tone than was usual in his age. Their trifling verbal explanations of *etsi* by *quamvis*, or *admodum* by *valde*; their strange ignorance in deriving the name of the Tiber from the Emperor Tiberius, in supposing that Ulpian and Justinian lived before Christ, in asserting that Papinian was put to death by Mark Antony, and even in interpreting *pontifex* by *papa* or *episcopus*, were the topics of ridicule to those whom Gravina has so well reproofed.* Savigny, who makes a similar remark, that we learn, without perceiving it and without any personal merit, a multitude of things which it was impossible to know in the twelfth century, defends his favourite glossers in the best manner he can, by laying part of the blame on the bad selection of Accursius, and by extolling the mental vigour which struggled through so many difficulties.† Yet he has the candour to own, that this rather enhances the respect due to the men, than the value of their writings; and, without much acquaintance with the ancient glossers, one may presume to think, that in explaining the Pandects, a book requiring, beyond any other that has descended to us, an extensive knowledge of the language and antiquities of Rome, their deficiencies, if to be measured by the instances we have given, or by the general character of their

* Gennari, author of *Respublica Jurisconsultorum*, a work of the last century, who, under colour of a fiction, gives rather an entertaining account of the principal jurists, exhibits some curious specimens of

the ignorance of the Accursian interpreters, such as those in the text. See too the article *Accursius* in Bayle.

† v. 213.

age, must require a perpetual exercise of our lenity and patience. CHAP.
I.

73. This great compilation of Accursius made an epoch in the annals of jurisprudence. It put an end in great measure to the oral explanations of lecturers which had prevailed before. It restrained at the same time the ingenuity of interpretation. The glossers became the sole authorities, so that it grew into a maxim,—No one can go wrong who follows a gloss : and some said, a gloss was worth a hundred texts.* In fact, the original was continually unintelligible to a student. But this was accompanied, according to the distinguished historian of mediæval jurisprudence, by a decline of the science. The jurists in the latter part of the thirteenth century are far inferior to the school of Irnerius. It might be possible to seek a general cause, as men are now always prone to do, in the loss of self-government in many of the Italian republics. But Savigny, superior to this affectation of philosophy, admits that this is neither a cause adequate in itself, nor chronologically parallel to the decline of jurisprudence. We must therefore look upon it as one of those revolutions, so ordinary and so unaccountable, in the history of literature, where, after a period fertile in men of great talents, there ensues, perhaps with no unfavourable change in the diffusion of knowledge, a pause in that natural fecundity, without which all our endeavours to check a retrograde movement of the human mind will be

Decline of
jurists after
Accursius.

* Bayle, *ubi supra*. Eichhorn, *Gesch. der litteratur*, ii, 461. Savigny, v. 268.

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1.

of no avail. The successors of Accursius in the thirteenth century contented themselves with an implicit deference to the glosses; but this is rather a proof of their inferiority than its cause.*

Respect
paid to him
at Bologna.

74. It has been the peculiar fortune of Accursius, that his name has always stood in a representative capacity, to engross the praise, or sustain the blame, of the great body of glossers from whom he compiled. One of those proofs of national gratitude and veneration was paid to his memory, which it is the more pleasing to recount, that, from the fickleness and insensibility of mankind, they do not very frequently occur. The city of Bologna was divided into the factions of Lambertazzi and Gieremei. The former, who were Ghibelins, having been wholly overthrown, and excluded, according to the practice of Italian republics, from all civil power, a law was made in 1306, that the family of Accursius, who had been on the vanquished side, should enjoy all the privileges of the victorious Guelf party, in regard to the memory of one "by whose means the city had been frequented by students, and its fame had been spread through the whole world."†

Scholastic
jurists.
Bartolus.

75. In the next century a new race of lawyers arose, who, by a different species of talent, almost eclipsed the greatest of their predecessors. These have been called the scholastic jurists, the glory of the schoolmen having excited an emulous desire to apply their dialectic methods in jurisprudence. ‡ Of these the most conspicuous were Bartolus and

* Savigny, v. 320.

† Ib. v. 268.

‡ The employment of logical

forms in law is not new; instances of it may be found in the earlier jurists. Savigny, v. 330.; vi. 6.

Baldus, especially the former, whose authority became still higher than that of the Accursian glossers. Yet Bartolus, if we may believe Eichhorn, content with the glosses, did not trouble himself about the text, which he was too ignorant of Roman antiquity, and even of the Latin language, unless he is much belied, to expound.* “He is so fond of distinctions,” says Gravina, “that he does not divide his subject, but breaks it to pieces, so that the fragments are, as it were, dispersed by the wind. But, whatever harm he might do to the just interpretation of the Roman law as a positive code, he was highly useful to the practical lawyer by the number of cases his fertile mind anticipated; for though many of these were unlikely to occur, yet his copiousness and subtlety of distinction is such that he seldom leaves those who consult him quite at a loss.”† Savigny, who rates Bartolus much below the older lawyers, gives him credit for original thoughts, to which his acquaintance with the practical exercise of justice gave rise. The older jurists were chiefly professors of legal science, rather than conversant with forensic causes; and this has produced an opposition between theory and practice in the Roman law, to which we have not much analogous in our own, but the remains of which are said to be still discernible in the continental jurisprudence.‡

* Geschichte der litteratur, ii. 449. Bartolus even said, *de verbis non curat jurisconsultus*. Eichhorn gives no authority for this, but Meiners, from whom perhaps he took it, quotes Comnenus, Historia Archigymnasii Patavini. Vergleichung der sitten, ii. 646. It seems however incredible.

† Origines Juris, p. 191.

‡ Savigny, vi. 138.; v. 201. Of Bartolus and his school it is said by Grotius, *Temporum suorum infelicitas impedimento sæpe fuit, quo minus recte leges illas intelligerent; satis solertes alioqui ad indagandam æqui bonique naturam; quo factum ut sæpe optimi sint condendi*

CHAP.
I.

Inferiority
of jurists in
fourteenth
and fif-
teenth
centuries.

76. The later expositors of law, those after the age of Accursius, are reproached with a tedious prolixity, which the scholastic refinements of disputation were apt to produce. They were little more conversant with philological and historical literature than their predecessors, and had less diligence in that comparison of texts, by which an acute understanding might compensate the want of subsidiary learning. In the use of language, the jurists, with hardly any exceptions, are uncouth and barbarous. The great school of Bologna had sent out all the earlier glossers. In the fourteenth century this university fell rather into decline; the jealousy of neighbouring states subjected its graduates to some disadvantage; and while the study of jurisprudence was less efficacious, it was more diffused. Italy alone had produced great masters of the science; the professions in France and Germany during the middle ages have left no great reputation.*

Classical
literature
and taste in
dark ages.

77. IV. The universities however, with their metaphysics derived from Aristotle through the medium of Arabian interpreters who did not understand him, and with the commentaries of Ara-

juris auctores, etiam tunc cum conditi juris mali sunt interpretes. Prolegomena in Jus Belli et Pacis.

* In this slight sketch of the early lawyers, I have been chiefly guided, as the reader will have perceived, by Gravina and Savigny, and also by a very neat and succinct sketch in Eichhorn, *Gesch. der Litteratur*, ii. 448—464. The *Origines Juris* of the first have en-

joyed a considerable reputation. But Savigny says with severity, that Gravina has thought so much more of his style than his subject, that all he says of the old jurists is perfectly worthless through its emptiness and want of criticism. iii. 72. Of Terrasson's *Histoire de la Jurisprudence Romaine*, he speaks in still lower terms.

bian philosophers who perverted him*, the developement of the modern languages with their native poetry, much more the glosses of the civil lawyers, are not what is commonly meant by the revival of learning. In this we principally consider the increased study of the Latin and Greek languages, and in general of what we call classical antiquity. In the earliest of the dark ages, as far back as the sixth century, the course of liberal instruction was divided into the trivium and the quadrivium; the former comprising grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the latter music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. But these sciences, which seem tolerably comprehensive, were in reality taught most superficially, or not at all. The Latin grammar, in its merest rudiments, from a little treatise ascribed to Donatus and extracts of Priscian†, formed the only necessary part of the trivium in ecclesiastical schools. Even this seems to have been introduced afresh by Bede and the writers of the eighth century, who much excel their immediate predecessors in avoiding gross solecisms of grammar.‡ It was natural that

* It has been a subject of controversy, whether the physical and metaphysical writings of Aristotle were made known to Europe at the beginning of the thirteenth century, through Constantinople, or through Arabic translations. The former supposition rests certainly on what seems good authority, that of Rigord, a contemporary historian. But the latter is now more generally received, and is said to be proved in a dissertation which I have not seen, by M. Jourdain. Tennemann, *Manuel de l'Hist. de la Philos.*, i. 355. These Arabic translations

were themselves not made directly from the Greek, but from the Syriac. It is thought by Buhle that the logic of Aristotle was known in Europe sooner.

† Fleury, xvii. 18. Andrès, ix. 284.

‡ Eichhorn, *Allg. Gesch.* ii. 73. The reader is requested to distinguish, at least if he cares about references, Eichhorn's *Allgemeine Geschichte der Cultur*, from his *Geschichte der Litteratur*, with which, in future, we shall have more concern.

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in England, where Latin had never been a living tongue, it should be taught better than in countries which still affected to speak it. From the time of Charlemagne it was lost on the continent in common use, and preserved only through glossaries, of which there were many. The style of Latin in the dark period, independently of its want of verbal purity, is in very bad taste; and none seem to have been more inflated and empty than the English.* The distinction between the ornaments adapted to poetry and to prose had long been lost, and still more the just sense of moderation in their use. It cannot be wondered at that a vicious rhetoric should have overspread the writings of the seventh and eighth centuries, when there is so much of it in the third and fourth.

Improve-
ment in
tenth and
eleventh
centuries.

78. Eichhorn fixes upon the latter part of the tenth century, as an epoch from which we are to deduce, in its beginnings, the restoration of classical taste; it was then that the scholars left the meagre introductions to rhetoric formerly used for the works of Cicero and Quintilian.† In the school of Paderborn, not long after 1000, Sallust and Statius, as well as Virgil and Horace, appear to have been read.‡ Several writers chiefly historical, about this period, such as Lambert of Aschaff-

* Fleury, xvii. 23. Ducange, preface to Glossary, p. 10. The Anglo-Saxon charters are distinguished for their pompous absurdity; and it is the general character of our early historians. One Ethelwerd is the worst; but William of Malmesbury himself, perhaps in some measure by tran-

scribing passages from others, sins greatly in this respect.

† Allg. Gesch., ii. 79.

‡ Viguit Horatius magnus atque Virgilius, Crispus et Sallustius, et Urbanus Statius, ludusque fuit omnibus insudare versibus et dictaminibus jucundisque cantibus. Vita Meinweri in Leibnitz Script. Brunsvic. apud Eichhorn, ii. 399.

burg, Ditmar, Wittikind, are tolerably exempt from the false taste of preceding times, and, if they want a truly classical tone, express themselves with some spirit.* Gerbert, who by an uncommon quickness of parts shone in very different provinces of learning, and was beyond question the most accomplished man of the dark ages, displays in his epistles a thorough acquaintance with the best Latin authors and a taste for their excellences.† He writes with the feelings of Petrarch, but in a more auspicious period. Even in England, if we may quote again the famous passage of Ingulfus, the rhetorical works of Cicero, as well as some book which he calls Aristotle, were read at Oxford under Edward the Confessor. But we have no indisputable name in the eleventh century, not even that of John de Garlandiâ, whose Floretus long continued to be a text-book in schools. This is a poor collection of extracts from Latin authors. It is uncertain whether or not the compiler were an Englishman.‡

79. It is admitted on all hands, that a remarkable improvement both in style and in the knowledge of Latin antiquity was perceptible towards the close of the eleventh century. The testimony of

Lanfranc,
and his
schools.

* Eichhorn, *Gesch. der Litteratur*, i. 807. Heeren, p. 157.

† Heeren, p. 165. It appears that Cicero de republicâ was extant in his time.

‡ *Hist. Litt. de la France*, viii. 84. They give very inconclusive reasons for robbing England of this writer, who certainly taught here under William the Conqueror, if not before, but it is possible enough that he came

over from France. They say there is no such surname in England as Garland, which happens to be a mistake; but the native English did not often bear surnames in that age.

The Anglo-Saxon clergy were inconceivably ignorant, ut cæteris esset stupori qui grammaticam didicisset. Will. Malmesbury, p. 101. This leads us to doubt the Aristotle and Cicero of Ingulfus.

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contemporaries attributes an extensively beneficial influence to Lanfranc. This distinguished person, born at Pavia in 1005, and early known as a scholar in Italy, passed into France about 1042 to preside over a school at Bec in Normandy. It became conspicuous under his care for the studies of the age, dialectics and theology. It is hardly necessary to add, that Lanfranc was raised by the Conqueror to the primacy of England, and thus belongs to our own history. Anselm, his successor both in the monastery of Bec and the see of Canterbury, far more renowned than Lanfranc for metaphysical acuteness, has shared with him the honour of having diffused a better taste for philological literature over the schools of France. It has, however, been denied by a writer of high authority, that either any knowledge, or any love of classical literature, can be traced in the works of the two archbishops. They are in this respect, he says, much inferior to those of Lupus, Gerbert, and others of the preceding ages.* His contemporaries, who extol the learning of Lanfranc in hyperbolic terms, do so in very indifferent Latin of their own; but it appears indeed more than doubtful, whether the earliest of them meant to praise him for this peculiar species of literature.† The

* Heeren, p. 185. There seems certainly nothing above the common in Lanfranc's epistles.

† Milo Crispinus, Abbot of Westminster, in his life of Lanfranc says of him, "Fuit quidam vir magnus Italia oriundus, quem Latinitas in antiquum scientiæ statum ab eo restituta tota supremum debito cum amore et honore

agnoscit magistrum, nomine Lanfrancus."

This passage, which is frequently quoted, surely refers to his eminence in dialectics. The words of William of Malmesbury go farther. "Is literatura perinsignis liberales artes quæ jamdudum sorduerant, a Latio in Gallias vocans acumine suo expolivit."

Benedictines of St. Maur cannot find much to say for him in this respect. They allege that he and Anselm wrote better than was then usual; a very moderate compliment. Yet they ascribe a great influence to their public lectures, and to the schools which were formed on the model of Bec.* And perhaps we could not without injustice deprive Lanfranc of the credit he has obtained for the promotion of polite letters. There is at least sufficient evidence that they had begun to revive in France not long after his time.

80. The signs of gradual improvement in Italy during the eleventh century are very perceptible; several schools, among which those of Milan and the convent of Monte Casino are most eminent, were established; and some writers, such as Peter Damiani and Humbert, have obtained praise for rather more elegance and polish of style than had belonged to their predecessors.† The Latin vocabulary of Papias was finished in 1053. This is a compilation from the grammars and glossaries of the sixth and seventh centuries; but, though many of his words are of very low latinity, and his ety-

Italy —
Vocabulary
of Papias.

* Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 17. 107.; viii. 304. The seventh volume of this long and laborious work begins with an excellent account of the literary condition of France in the eleventh century. At the beginning of the ninth volume we have a similar view of the twelfth. The continuation, of which four volumes have already been published at Paris, I have not seen. It has but begun to break ground, if I may so say, in the thirteenth century, as I find from the *Journal des Savans*. The

laboriousness of the French, as well as the encouragement they receive from their government, are above all praise, and should be our own shame; but their prolixity now and then defeats the object. The magnificent work, the *Ordonnances des Rois de France*, is a proof of this; time gains a march on the successive volumes, and the laws of four years are published at the end of five.

† Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d'Italia dopo il mille*. Tiraboschi, iii. 248.

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I.Influence
of Italy
upon Eu-
rope.

mologies, which are those of his masters, absurd, he both shows a competent degree of learning, and a regard to profane literature, unusual in the darker ages, and symptomatic of a more liberal taste.*

81. It may be said with some truth, that Italy supplied the fire, from which other nations in this first, as afterwards in the second æra of the revival of letters, lighted their own torches. Lanfranc, Anselm, Peter Lombard, the founder of systematic theology in the twelfth century, Irnerius, the restorer of jurisprudence, Gratian, the author of the first compilation of canon law, the school of Salerno, that guided medical art in all countries, the first dictionaries of the Latin tongue, the first treatise of algebra, the first great work that makes an epoch in anatomy, are as truly and exclusively the boast of Italy, as the restoration of Greek literature and of classical taste in the fifteenth century.† But if she were the first to propagate an impulse towards intellectual excellence in the rest of Europe, it must be owned, that France and England, in

* The date of the vocabulary of Papias had been placed by Scaliger, who says he has as many errors as words, in the thirteenth century. But Gaspar Barthius, in his *Adversaria*, c. i., after calling him, "veterum Glossagraphorum compactor non semper futilis," observes, that Papias mentions an Emperor, Henry II., as then living, and thence fixes the æra of his book in the early part of the eleventh century, in which he is followed by Bayle, art. Balbi. It is rather singular that neither of those writers recollected the usage of the

Italians to reckon as Henry II. the prince whom the Germans call Henry III., Henry the Fowler not being included by them in the imperial list; and Bayle himself quotes a writer, unpublished in the age of Barthius, who places Papias in the year 1053. This date I believe is given by Papias himself. Tiraboschi, iii. 300. A pretty full account of the Latin glossaries before and after Papias will be found in the preface to Ducange, p. 38.

† Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d'Italia*, p. 71.

this dawn of literature and science, went in many points of view far beyond her.

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82. Three religious orders, all scions from the great Benedictine stock, that of Clugni, which dates from the first part of the tenth century, the Carthusians, founded in 1084, and the Cistercians, in 1098, contributed to propagate classical learning.* The monks of these foundations exercised themselves in copying manuscripts; the arts of calligraphy, and, not long afterwards, of illumination, became their pride; a more cursive handwriting and a more convenient system of abbreviations were introduced; and thus from the twelfth century we find a great increase of manuscripts, though transcribed mechanically, as a monastic duty, and often with much incorrectness. The abbey of Clugni had a rich library of Greek and Latin authors. But few monasteries of the Benedictine rule were destitute of one; it was their pride to collect, and their business to transcribe, books.† These were, in a vast proportion, such as we do not highly value at the present day; yet almost all we do possess of Latin classical literature, with the exception of a small number of more ancient manuscripts, is owing to the industry of these monks. In that age, there was perhaps less zeal for literature in Italy, and less practice in copying, than in France.‡ This shifting of intellectual exertion from one country to another is not peculiar to the middle ages; but, in regard to them, it has not

Increased
copying of
manu-
scripts.

* Fleury. Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 113.

† Ibid. ix. 139.

‡ Heeren, p. 197.

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always been heeded by those who, using the trivial metaphor of light and darkness, which it is not easy to avoid, have too much considered Europe as a single point under a receding or advancing illumination.

John of
Salisbury.

83. France and England were the only countries where any revival of classical taste was perceived. In Germany no sensible improvement in philological literature can be traced, according to Eichhorn and Heeren, before the invention of printing, though I think this must be understood with exceptions; and that Otho of Frisingen, Saxo Grammaticus, and Gunther, author of the poem entitled *Ligurinus* (who belongs to the first years of the thirteenth century), might stand on equal terms with any of their contemporaries. But, in the schools which are supposed to have borrowed light from Lanfranc and Anselm, a more keen perception of the beauties of the Latin language, as well as an exacter knowledge of its idiom, was imparted. John of Salisbury, himself one of their most conspicuous ornaments, praises the method of instruction pursued by Bernard of Chartres about the end of the eleventh century, who seems indeed to have exercised his pupils vigorously in the rules of grammar and rhetoric. After the first grammatical instruction out of Donatus and Priscian, they were led forward to the poets, orators, and historians of Rome; the precepts of Cicero and Quintilian were studied, and sometimes observed with affectation.* An admiration of the great

* *Hist. Litt. de la France*, vii. 16.

classical writers, an excessive love of philology, and disdain of the studies that drew men from it, shine out in the two curious treatises of John of Salisbury. He is perpetually citing the poets, especially Horace, and had read most of Cicero. Such at least is the opinion of Heeren, who bestows also a good deal of praise upon his Latinity.* Eichhorn places him at the head of all his contemporaries. But no one has admired his style so much as Meiners, who declares that he has no equal in the writers of the third, fourth, or fifth centuries, except Lactantius and Jerome.† In this I cannot but think there is some exaggeration; the style of John of Salisbury, far from being equal to that of Augustin, Eutropius, and a few more of those early ages, does not appear to me by any means elegant; sometimes he falls upon a good expression, but the general tone is not very classical. The reader may judge from the passage in the note.‡

* p. 203. Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 47. Peter of Blois also possessed a very respectable stock of classical literature.

† Vergleichung der sitten, ii. 586. He says nearly as much of Saxo Grammaticus and William of Malmesbury. If my recollection of the former does not deceive me, he is a better writer than our monk of Malmesbury.

‡ One of the most interesting passages in John of Salisbury is that above cited, in which he gives an account of the method of instruction pursued by Bernard of Chartres, whom he calls exundantissimus modernis temporibus fons literarum in Gallia. John himself was taught by some who trod in

the steps of this eminent preceptor. Ad hujus magistri formam præceptores mei in grammatica, Gulielmus de Conchis, et Richardus cognomento Episcopus, officio nunc archidiaconus Constantiensis, vita et conversatione vir bonus, suos discipulos aliquando informaverunt. Sed postmodum ex quo opinio veritati præjudicium fecit, et homines videri quam esse philosophi maluerunt, professoresque artium se totam philosophiam brevius quam triennio aut quadriennio transfusuros auditoribus pollicebantur, impetu multitudinis imperitæ victi cesserunt. Exinde autem minus temporis et diligentiae in grammaticæ studio impensum est. Ex quo contigit ut qui omnes

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Improve-
ment of
classical
taste in
twelfth cen-
tury.

84. It is generally acknowledged that in the twelfth century we find several writers, Abelard, Eloisa, Bernard of Clairvaux, Saxo Grammaticus, William of Malmesbury, Peter of Blois, whose style, though never correct, which, in the absence of all better dictionaries than that of Papias, was impossible, and sometimes affected, sometimes too florid and diffuse, is not wholly destitute of spirit, and even of elegance *; the Latin poetry, instead of Leonine rhymes, or attempts at regular hexameters almost equally bad, becomes, in the hands of Gunther, Gualterus de Insulis, Gulielmus Brito, and Joseph Iscanus, to whom a considerable number of names might be added, always tolerable, sometimes truly spirited †; and amidst all that still demands the most liberal indulgence, we cannot but perceive the real progress of classical knowledge, and the development of a finer taste in Europe. ‡

Influence
of increased
number of
clergy.

85. The vast increase of religious houses in the twelfth century rendered necessary more attention to the rudiments of literature. § Every monk, as

artes, tam liberales quam mechanicas profitentur, nec priusquam noverint, sine qua frustra quis progredietur ad reliquas. Licet autem et aliæ disciplinæ ad literaturam proficiant, hæc tamen privilegio singulari facere dicitur literatum. Metalog., lib. i. c. 24.

* Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 146. The Benedictines are scarcely fair towards Abelard (xii. 147.), whose style, as far as I have seen, which is not much, seems equal to that of his contemporaries.

† Warton has done some justice to the Anglo-Latin poets of this century, who have lately been

published at Paris. The Trojan War and Antiocheis of Joseph Iscanus, he calls "a miracle in this age of classical composition." The style, he says, is a mixture of Ovid, Statius, and Claudian. Vol. i. p. 163. The extracts Warton gives seem to me a close imitation of the second. The Philippis of William Brito must be of the thirteenth century, and Warton refers the Ligurinus of Gunther to 1206.

‡ Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. ix. Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. der Cultur, ii. 30. 62. Heeren, Meiners.

§ Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 11.

well as every secular priest, required a certain portion of Latin. In the ruder and darker ages many illiterate persons had been ordained; there were even kingdoms, as, for example, England, where this is said to have been almost general. But the canons of the church demanded of course such a degree of instruction as the continual use of a dead language made indispensable; and in this first dawn of learning there can be, I presume, no doubt that none received the higher orders, or became professed in a monastery, for which the order of priesthood was necessary, without some degree of grammatical knowledge. Hence this kind of education in the rudiments of the Latin was imparted to a greater number of individuals than at present.

86. The German writers to whom we principally refer, have expatiated upon the decline of literature after the middle of the twelfth century, unexpectedly disappointing the bright promise of that age, so that for almost two hundred years we find Europe fallen back in learning where we might have expected her progress.* This however is hardly true, in the most limited sense, of the latter part of the twelfth century, when that purity of classical taste, which Eichhorn and others seem chiefly to have had in their minds, was displayed in better Latin poetry than had been written before. In a general view, the thirteenth century was an age of activity and ardour, though

*Decline of
classical
literature in
thirteenth
century.*

* Meiners, ii. 605. Heeren, section, *Die Wissenschaften* verfallen in Barbarey, seems much too generally expressed.
p. 228. Eichhorn, *Allg. Gesch. der Litteratur*, ii. 63—118.

The running title of Eichhorn's

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not in every respect the best directed. The fertility of the modern languages in versification, the creation, we may almost say, of Italian and English in this period, the great concourse of students to the universities, the acute, and sometimes profound, reasonings of the scholastic philosophy, which was now in its most palmy state, the accumulation of knowledge, whether derived from original research, or from Arabian sources of information, which we find in the geometers, the physicians, the natural philosophers of Europe, are sufficient to repel the charge of having fallen back, or even remained altogether stationary, in comparison with the preceding century. But in politeness of Latin style, it is admitted that we find an astonishing and permanent decline both in France and England. Such complaints are usual in the most progressive times; and we might not rely on John of Salisbury when he laments the decline of taste in his own age.* But in fact it would have been rather singular, if a classical purity had kept its ground. A stronger party, and one hostile to polite letters, as well as ignorant of them,—that of the theologians and dialecticians,—carried with it the popular voice in the church and the universities. The time allotted by these to philological literature was curtailed, that the professors of logic and philosophy might detain their pupils longer. Grammar continued to be taught in the university of Paris; but rhe-

* *Metalogicus*, l. i. c. 24. This passage has been frequently quoted. He was very inimical to the dialecticians, as philologists generally are.

toric, another part of the trivium, was given up; by which it is to be understood, as I conceive, that no classical authors were read, or, if at all, for the sole purpose of verbal explanation.* The thirteenth century, says Heeren, was one of the most unfruitful for the study of ancient literature.† He does not seem to except Italy, though there, as we shall soon see, the remark is hardly just. But in Germany the tenth century, Leibnitz declares, was a golden age of learning, compared with the thirteenth‡; and France itself is but a barren waste in this period. The relaxation of manners among the monastic orders, which, generally speaking, is the increasing theme of complaint from the eleventh century, and the swarms of worse vermin, the Mendicant Friars, who filled Europe with stupid superstition, are assigned by Meiners and Heeren as the leading causes of the return of ignorance.§

87. The writers of the thirteenth century display an incredible ignorance, not only of pure idiom, but of the common grammatical rules. Those who attempted to write verse have lost all prosody, and relapse into Leonine rhymes and barbarous acrostics. The historians use a hybrid jargon intermixed with modern words. The scholastic philosophers wholly neglected their style,

Relapse
into barbarism

* Crevier, ii. 376.

† p. 237.

‡ Introduction in Script. Brunwic., § lxiii., apud Heeren. et Meiners, ii. 631. No one has dwelt more fully than this last writer on the decline of literature in the thirteenth century, out of his cordial antipathy to the schoolmen. p. 589. et post.

Wood, who has no prejudices against popery, ascribes the low state of learning in England under Edward III. and Richard II. to the misconduct of the mendicant friars, and to the papal provisions that impoverished the church.

§ Meiners, ii. 615. Heeren, 235.

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and thought it no wrong to enrich the Latin, as in some degree a living language, with terms that seemed to express their meaning. In the writings of Albertus Magnus, of whom Fleury says that he can see nothing great in him but his volumes, the grossest errors of syntax frequently occur, and vie with his ignorance of history and science. Through the sinister example of this man, according to Meiners, the notion that Latin should be written with regard to ancient models, was lost in the universities for three hundred years; an evil, however, slight in comparison with what he inflicted on Europe by the credit he gave to astrology, alchemy, and magic.* Duns Scotus and his disciples, in the next century, carried this much farther, and introduced a most barbarous and unintelligible terminology, by which the school metaphysics were rendered ridiculous in the revival of literature.† Even the jurists, who more required an accurate knowledge of the language, were hardly less barbarous. Roger Bacon, who is not a good writer, stands at the head in this century.‡ Fortunately, as has been said, the transcribing ancient authors had become a mechanical habit in some monasteries. But it was done in an ignorant and slovenly manner. The manuscripts of these latter ages, before the invention of printing, are by far the most numerous, but they are also the most incorrect, and generally of little value in the eyes of critics.§

* Meiners, ii. 692. Fleury, 5me discours, in Hist. Eccles., xvii. 44. Buhle, i. 702.

† Meiners, ii. 721.
‡ Heeren, p. 245.
§ Id. p. 304.

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No improvement
in fourteenth
century.
Richard of
Bury.

88. The fourteenth century was not in the slightest degree superior to the preceding age. France, England, and Germany were wholly destitute of good Latin scholars in this period. The age of Petrarch and Boccaccio, the age before the close of which classical learning truly revived in Italy, gave no sign whatever of animation throughout the rest of Europe; the genius it produced, and in this it was not wholly deficient, displayed itself in other walks of literature.* We may justly praise Richard of Bury for his zeal in collecting books, and still more for his munificence in giving his library to the university of Oxford, with special injunctions that they should be lent to scholars. But his erudition appears crude and uncritical, his style indifferent, and his thoughts superficial.† Yet I am not aware that he had any equal in England during this century.

89. The patronage of letters, or collection of books, are not reckoned among the glories of Edward III.; though, if any respect had been attached to learning in his age and country, they might well have suited his magnificent disposition. His adversaries, John, and especially Charles V., of France, have more claims upon the remembrance of a literary historian. Several Latin authors were translated into French by their directions‡; and

Library
formed by
Charles V.
at Paris.

* Heeren, p. 300. Andrés, iii. 10.

† The Philobiblon of Richard Aungerville, often called Richard of Bury, Chancellor of Edward III., is worthy of being read, as containing some curious illustrations of the state of literature. He quotes a wretched poem de

Vetulâ as Ovid's, and shows little learning, though he had a great esteem for it. See a note of War- ton, History of English Poetry, i. 146., on Aungerville.

‡ Crevier, ii. 424. War- ton has amassed a great deal of information, not always very accurate, upon the subject of early French transla-

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Charles, who himself was not ignorant of Latin, began to form the Royal Library of the Louvre. We may judge from this of the condition of literature in his time. The number of volumes was about 900. Many of these, especially the missals and psalters, were richly bound and illuminated. Books of devotion formed the larger portion of the library. The profane authors, except some relating to French history, were in general of little value in our sight. Very few classical works are in the list, and no poets except Ovid and Lucan.* This library came, during the subsequent English wars, into the possession of the duke of Bedford; and Charles VII. laid the foundations of that which still exists.†

Some improvement
in Italy
during
thirteenth
century.

90. This retrograde condition, however, of classical literature, was only perceptible in Cisalpine Europe. By one of those shiftings of literary illumination to which we have alluded, Italy, far lower in classical taste than France in the twelfth century, deserved a higher place in the next. Tiraboschi says that the progress in polite letters was slow, but still that some was made; more good books were transcribed, there were more readers, and of these some took on them to imitate what they read; so that gradually the darkness which

tions. These form a considerable portion of the literature of that country in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. *Hist. of English poetry*, ii. 414—430. See also de Sade, *Vie de Pétrarque*, iii. 548.; and Crevier, *Hist. de l'Univ. de Paris*, ii. 424.

* Warton adds Cicero to the

classical list; and I am sorry to say that, in my *History of the Middle Ages*, I have been led wrong by him. Bouvin, his only authority, expressly says, *pas un seul manuscrit de Ciceron*. *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.*, ii. 693.

† *Id.* 701.

overspread the land began to be dispersed. Thus we find that those who wrote at the end of the thirteenth century were less rude in style than their predecessors at its commencement.* A more elaborate account of the state of learning in the thirteenth century will be found in the life of Ambrogio Traversari, by Mehus; and several names are there mentioned, among whom that of Brunetto Latini is the most celebrated. Latini translated some of the rhetorical treatises of Cicero.† And we may perhaps consider as a witness to some degree of progressive learning in Italy at this time, the *Catholicon* of John Balbi, a Genoese monk, more frequently styled Januensis. This book is chiefly now heard of, because the first edition, printed by Gutenberg in 1460, is a book of uncommon rarity and price. It is however deserving of some notice in the annals of literature. It consists of a Latin grammar, followed by a dictionary, both perhaps superior to what we should expect from the general character of the times. They are at least copious; the *Catholicon* is a volume of great bulk. Balbi quotes abundantly from the Latin classics, and appears not wholly unacquainted with Greek; though I must own that Tiraboschi and Eichhorn have thought otherwise. The *Catholicon*, as far as I can judge from a slight inspection of it, deserves rather more credit than it has in modern times obtained. In the grammar, besides a familiarity with the termino-

Catholicon
of Balbi.

* iv. 420. The Latin versifiers of the thirteenth century were numerous, but generally very indifferent. Id. 378.

† Mehus, p. 157. Tiraboschi, p. 418.

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logy of the old grammarians, he will be found to have stated some questions as to the proper use of words, with *dubitari solet, multum quæritur* ; which, though they are superficial enough, indicate that a certain attention was beginning to be paid to correctness in writing. From the great size of the Catholicon, its circulation must have been very limited.*

Imperfection of early
diction-
aries.

91. In the dictionary however of John of Genoa, as in those of Papias and the other glossarists, we find little distinction made between the different gradations of Latinity. The Latin tongue was to them, except so far as the ancient grammarians whom they copied might indicate some to be obsolete, a single body of words ; and, ecclesiastics as they were, they could not understand that Ambrose and Hilary were to be proscribed in the vocabulary of a language which was chiefly learned for the sake of reading their works. Nor had they the means of pronouncing, what it has cost the labour of succeeding centuries to do, that there is no adequate classical authority for innumerable

* Libellum hunc (says Balbi at the conclusion) ad honorem Dei et gloriosæ Virginis Mariæ, et beati Domini patris nostri et omnium sanctorum electorum, necnon ad utilitatem meam et ecclesiæ sanctæ Dei, ex diversis majorum meorum dictis multo labore et diligenti studio compilavi. Operis quippe ac studii mei est et fuit multos libros legere et ex plurimis diversos carpere flores.

Eichhorn speaks severely, and, I am disposed to think, unjustly, of the Catholicon, as without order and plan, or any knowledge of

Greek, as the author himself confesses (Gesch. der Literatur, ii. 238.). The order and plan are alphabetical, as usual in a dictionary ; and though Balbi does not lay claim to much Greek, I do not think he professes entire ignorance of it. Hoc difficile est scire et minimè mihi non bene scienti linguam Græcam :—apud Gradenigo, Litteratura Greco-Italiana, p. 104. I have observed that Balbi calls himself *philocalus*, which indeed is no evidence of much Greek erudition.

words and idioms in common use. Their knowledge of syntax also was very limited. The prejudice of the church against profane authors had by no means wholly worn away: much less had they an exclusive possession of the grammar-schools, most of the books taught in which were modern. Papias, Uguccio, and other indifferent lexicographers, were of much authority.* The general ignorance in Italy was still very great. In the middle of the fourteenth century we read of a man, supposed to be learned, who took Plato and Cicero for poets, and thought Ennius a contemporary of Statius.†

92. The first real restorer of polite letters was Petrarch. His fine taste taught him to relish the beauties of Virgil and Cicero, and his ardent praises of them inspired his compatriots with a desire for classical knowledge. A generous disposition to encourage letters began to show itself among the Italian princes. Robert, king of Naples, in the early part of this century, one of the first patrons of Petrarch, and several of the great families of Lombardy, gave this proof of the humanising effects of peace and prosperity.‡ It has been thought by some, that but for his appearance and influence at that period, the manuscripts themselves would have perished, as several had done in no long time before; so forgotten and abandoned

Restoration
of letters
due to
Petrarch.

* Mehus. Muratori, Dissert. 44.

† Mehus, p. 211. Tiraboschi, v. 82.

‡ Tiraboschi, v. 20. et post. Ten universities were founded in Italy during the fourteenth cen-

tury, some of which did not last long. Rome and Fermo in 1303; Perugia in 1307; Treviso about 1320; Pisa in 1339; Pavia not long after; Florence in 1348; Siena in 1357; Lucca in 1369, and Ferrara in 1391.

CHAP.
I.

Character of
his style.

to dust and vermin were those precious records in the dungeons of monasteries.* He was the first who brought in that almost deification of the great ancient writers, which, though carried in following ages to an absurd extent, was the animating sentiment of solitary study; that through which its fatigues were patiently endured, and its obstacles surmounted. Petrarch tells us himself, that while his comrades at school were reading *Æsop's Fables*, or a book of one Prosper, a writer of the fifth century, his time was given to the study of Cicero, which delighted his ear long before he could understand the sense.† It was much at his heart to acquire a good style in Latin. And, relatively to his predecessors of the mediæval period, we may say that he was successful. Passages full of elegance and feeling, in which we are at least not much offended by incorrectness of style, are frequent in his writings. But the fastidious scholars of later times contemned these imperfect endeavours at purity. "He wants," says Erasmus, "full acquaintance with the language, and his whole diction shows the rudeness of the preceding age."‡ An Italian writer, somewhat earlier, speaks still more unfavourably. "His style is harsh, and scarcely bears the character of Latinity. His writings are indeed full of thought, but defective in expression, and display the marks of labour without the polish of

* Heeren, 270.

† Et illa quidem ætate nihil intelligere poteram, sola me verborum dulcedo quædam et sonoras detinebat ut quicquid aliud vel

legerem vel audirem, raucum mihi dissonumque videretur. Epist. Seniles, lib. xv., apud de Sade, i. 36.

‡ Ciceronianus.

elegance.”* I incline to agree with Meiners in rating the style of Petrarch somewhat more highly.† Of Boccace the writer above quoted gives even a worse character. “Licentious and inaccurate in his diction, he has no idea of selection. All his Latin writings are hasty, crude, and unformed. He labours with thought, and struggles to give it utterance; but his sentiments find no adequate vehicle, and the lustre of his native talents is obscured by the depraved taste of the times.” Yet his own mother tongue owes its earliest model of grace and refinement to his pen.

93. Petrarch was more proud of his Latin poem called *Africa*, the subject of which is the termination of the second Punic war, than of the sonnets and odes, which have made his name immortal, though they were not the chief sources of his immediate renown. It is indeed written with elaborate elegance, and perhaps superior to any preceding specimen of Latin versification in the middle ages, unless we should think Joseph Iscanus his equal. But it is more to be praised for taste than correctness; and though in the Basle edition of 1554, which I have used, the printer has been excessively negligent, there can be no doubt that the Latin poetry of Petrarch abounds with faults of metre. His eclogues, many of which

His Latin
poetry.

* Paulus Cortesius de hominibus doctis. I take the translations from Roscoe's *Lorenzo de' Medici*, c. vii.

† *Vergleichung der Sitten*, iii. 126. Meiners has expatiated for fifty pages, pp. 94–147., on the

merits of Petrarch in the restoration of classical literature; he seems unable to leave the subject. Heeren, though less diffuse, is not less panegyrical. De Sade's three quartos are certainly a little tedious.

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I.

are covert satires on the court of Avignon, appear to me more poetical than the *Africa*, and are sometimes very beautifully expressed. The eclogues of Boccaccio, though by no means indifferent, do not equal those of Petrarch.

John of
Ravenna.

94. Mehus, whom Tiraboschi avowedly copies, has diligently collected the names, though little more than the names, of Latin teachers at Florence in the fourteenth century.* But among the earlier of these there was no good method of instruction, no elegance of language. The first who revealed the mysteries of a pure and graceful style, was John Malpaghino, commonly called John of Ravenna, one whom in his youth Petrarch had loved as a son, and who not very long before the end of the century taught Latin at Padua and Florence.† The best scholars of the ensuing age were his disciples, and among them was Gasparin of Barziza, or, as generally called, of Bergamo, justly characterised by Eichhorn as the father of a pure and elegant Latinity.‡ The distinction between the genuine Latin language and that of the lower empire was from this generally recognised; and the writers who had been regarded as standards were thrown away with contempt. This is the proper æra of the revival of letters, and nearly coincides with the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Gasparin of
Barziza.

* Vita Traversari, p. 348.

† A life of John Malpaghino of Ravenna is the first in Meiner's *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter männer*, 3 vols, Zurich, 1795, but it is wholly taken from Petrarch's

Letters, and from Mehus's *Life of Traversari*, p. 348. See also Tiraboschi, v. 554.

‡ Geschichte der Litteratur, ii. 241.

95. A few subjects, affording less extensive observation, we have postponed to the next chapter, which will contain the literature of Europe in the first part of the fifteenth century. Notwithstanding our wish to preserve in general a strict regard to chronology, it has been impossible to avoid some interruptions of it without introducing a multiplicity of transitions incompatible with any comprehensive views ; and which, even as it must inevitably exist in a work of this nature, is likely to diminish the pleasure, and perhaps the advantage, that the reader might derive from it.

CHAP.
I.

CHAP. II.

ON THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE FROM 1400
TO 1440.

Cultivation of Latin in Italy — Revival of Greek Literature — Vestiges of it during the Middle Ages — It is taught by Chrysoloras — his Disciples — and by learned Greeks — State of Classical Learning in other Parts of Europe — Physical Sciences — Mathematics — Medicine and Anatomy. — Poetry in Spain, France, and England. — Formation of new Laws of Taste in Middle Ages — Their Principles — Romances — Religious Opinions.

CHAP.
II.

Zeal for
classical
literature in
Italy.

1. GINGUÉNÉ has well observed, that the fourteenth century left Italy in the possession of the writings of three great masters, of a language formed and polished by them, and of a strong relish for classical learning. But this soon became the absorbing passion, fortunately, no doubt, in the result, as the same author has elsewhere said, since all the exertions of an age were required to explore the rich mine of antiquity, and fix the standard of taste and purity for succeeding generations. The ardour for classical studies grew stronger every day. To write Latin correctly, to understand the allusions of the best authors, to learn the rudiments at least of Greek, were the objects of every cultivated mind.

Poggio
Braccio-
lini.

2. The first half of the fifteenth century has been sometimes called the age of Poggio Bracciolini, which it expresses not very inaccurately as

to his literary life, since he was born in 1381, and died in 1459; but it seems to involve too high a compliment. The chief merit of Poggio was his diligence, aided by good fortune, in recovering lost works of Roman literature, that lay mouldering in the repositories of convents. Hence we owe to this one man eight orations of Cicero, a complete Quintilian, Columella, part of Lucretius, three books of Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Tertullian, and several less important writers: twelve comedies of Plautus were also recovered in Germany through his directions.* Poggio besides this was undoubtedly a man of considerable learning for his time, and still greater sense and spirit as a writer, though he never reached a very correct or elegant style.†

* Shepherd's Life of Poggio. Tiraboschi. Corniani. Roscoe's Lorenzo, ch. i. Fabricius, in his *Bibliotheca Latina mediæ et infimæ ætatis*, gives a list not quite the same; but Poggio's own authority must be the best. The work first above quoted is for the literary history of Italy in the earlier half of the fifteenth century, what Roscoe's Lorenzo is for the latter. Ginguéné has not added much to what these English authors and Tiraboschi had furnished.

† Mr. Shepherd has judged Poggio a little favourably, as became a biographer, but with sense and discrimination. His Italian translator, the *Avvocato Tonelli* (Firenze, 1825), goes much beyond the mark in extolling Poggio above all his contemporaries, and praising his "*vastissima erudizione*" in the strain of hyperbole too familiar to Italians. This vast learn-

ing, even for that time, Poggio did not possess: we have no reason to believe him equal to Guarino, Filetfo, or Traversari, much less to Valla. Erasmus however was led by his partiality to Valla into some injustice towards Poggio, whom he calls *rabula adeo indoc-tus, ut etiamsi vacaret obscenitate, tamen indignus esset qui legeretur, adeo autem obscenus ut etiamsi doctissimus esset, tamen esset a viris bonis rejiciendus*. Epist. ciii. This is said too hastily; but in his Ciceronianus, where we have his deliberate judgment, he appreciates Poggio more exactly. After one of the interlocutors has called him *vividæ cujusdam eloquentiæ virum*, the other replies: — *Naturæ satis erat, artis et eruditionis non multum; interim impuro sermonis fluxu, si Laurentio Vallæ credimus. Bebel, a German of some learning, rather older than Erasmus, in a letter quoted by Blount*

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II.

Latin style
of that age
indifferent.

And this applies to all those who wrote before the year 1440, with the single exception of Gasparin; to Coluccio Salutato, Guarino of Verona, and even Leonard Aretin.* Nor is this any disparagement to their abilities and industry. They had neither grammars nor dictionaries, in which the purest Latinity was distinguishable from the worst; they had to unlearn a barbarous jargon, made up with scraps of the Vulgate, and of ecclesiastical writers, which pervades the Latin of the middle ages; they had great difficulty in resorting to purer models, from the scarcity and high price of manuscripts, as well as from their general incorrectness,

(*Censura Auctorum*, in Poggio), praises Poggio very highly for his style, and prefers him to Valla. Paulus Cortesius seems not much to differ from Erasmus about Poggio, though he is more severe on Valla.

It should be added, that Tonelli's notes on the life of Poggio are useful; among other things he points out that Poggio did not learn Greek of Emanuel Chrysoloras, as all writers on this part of literary history had hitherto supposed, but about 1423, when he was turned of forty.

* Coluccio Salutato belongs to the fourteenth century, and was deemed one of its greatest ornaments in learning. Ma a dir vero, says Tiraboschi, who admits his extensive erudition, relatively to his age, benchè lo stil di Coluccio abbia non rare volte energia e forza maggiore che quello della maggior parti degli altri scrittori di questi tempi, è certo però, che tanto è diverso da quello di Cicerone nella prosa, e ne' versi da quel di Virgilio, quanto appunto

è diversa una scimia da un uomo. v. 537.

Cortesius, in the dialogue quoted above, says of Leonard Aretin:—*Hic primus inconditam scribendi consuetudinem ad numerosum quendam sonum inflexit, et attulit hominibus nostris aliquid certe splendidius. . . Et ego video hunc nondum satis esse limatum, nec delicatiori fastidio tolerabilem.* Atqui dialogi Joannis Ravennatis vix semel leguntur, et Coluccii *Epistolæ*, quæ tum in honore erant, non apparent; sed Boccacii *Genealogiam* legimus, utilem illam quidem, sed non tamen cum *Petrarchæ ingenio conferendam.* At non videtis quantum his omnibus desit? p. 12. Of Guarino he says afterwards:—*Genus tamen dicendi inconcinnum admodum est et salebrosum; utitur plerumque imprudens verbis poeticis, quod est maxime vitiosum; sed magis est in eo succus, quam color laudandus.* Memoria teneo, quendam familiarem meum solitum dicere, melius Guarinum famæ suæ consuluisse, si nihil unquam scripsisset, p. 14.

which it required much attention to set right. Gasparin of Barziza took the right course, by incessantly turning over the pages of Cicero; and thus by long habit gained an instinctive sense of propriety in the use of language, which no secondary means at that time could have given him.

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II.

3. This writer, often called Gasparin of Bergamo, his own birth-place being in the neighbourhood of that city, was born about 1370, and began to teach before the close of the century. He was transferred to Padua by the Senate of Venice, in 1407; and in 1410 accepted the invitation of Filippo Maria Visconti to Milan, where he remained till his death, in 1431. Gasparin had here the good fortune to find Cicero de Oratore, and to restore Quintilian by the help of the manuscript brought from St. Gall by Poggio, and another found in Italy by Leonard Aretin. His fame as a writer was acquired at Padua, and founded on his diligent study of Cicero.

Gasparin
of Barziza.

4. It is impossible to read a page of Gasparin without perceiving that he is quite of another order of scholars from his predecessors. He is truly Ciceronian in his turn of phrases and structure of sentences, which never end awkwardly, or with a wrong arrangement of words, as is habitual with his contemporaries. Inexact expressions may of course be found, but they do not seem gross or numerous. Among his works are several orations which probably were actually delivered: they are the earliest models of that classical declamation which became so usual afterwards, and are elegant, if not very forcible. His *Epistolæ ad Exercita-*

Merits of
his style.

CHAP.
II.

Victorin of
Feltre.

tionem accommodatæ was the first book printed at Paris. It contains a series of exercises for his pupils, probably for the sake of double translation, and merely designed to exemplify Latin idioms.*

5. If Gasparin was the best writer of this generation, the most accomplished instructor was Victorin of Feltre, to whom the marquis of Mantua entrusted the education of his own children. Many of the Italian nobility, and some distinguished scholars, were brought up under the care of Victorin in that city; and, in a very corrupt age, he was still more zealous for their moral than their literary improvement. A pleasing account of his method of discipline will be found in Tiraboschi, or more fully in Corniani, from a life written by one of Victorin's pupils, named Prendilacqua.† "It could hardly be believed," says Tiraboschi, "that in an age of such rude manners, a model of such perfect education could be found: if all to whom the care of youth is entrusted would make it theirs, what ample and rich fruits they would derive from their labours." The learning of Victorin was extensive; he possessed a moderate library,

* Morhof, who says, *primus in Italia aliquid balbutire cœpit Gasparinus*, had probably never seen his writings, which are a great deal better, in point of language, than his own. Cortesius however blames Gasparin for too elaborate a style; *nimia cura attenuabat orationem*.

He once uses a Greek word in his letters; what he knew of the language does not otherwise appear; but he might have heard Guarino at Venice. He had not seen Pliny's Natural History, nor did he possess a Livy, but was in

treaty for one. *Epist. p. 200. A. D. 1415.*

† Tiraboschi, vii. 306. Corniani, ii. 53. Heeren, p. 235. He is also mentioned, with much praise for his mode of education, by his friend Ambrogio Traversari, a passage from whose *Hodopæricon* will be found in Heeren, p. 237. Victorin died in 1447, and was buried at the public expense, his liberality in giving gratuitous instruction to the poor having left him so.

and rigidly demanding a minute exactness from his pupils in their interpretation of ancient authors, as well as in their own compositions, laid the foundations of a propriety in style, which the next age was to display. Traversari visited the school of Victorin, for whom he entertained a great regard, in 1433; it had then been for some years established.* No writings of Victorin have been preserved.

6. Among the writers of these forty years, after Gasparin of Bergamo, we may probably assign the highest place in politeness of style to Leonardo Bruni, more commonly called Aretino, from his birth-place, Arezzo. "He was the first," says Paulus Cortesius, "who replaced the rude structure of periods by some degree of rhythm, and introduced our countrymen to something more brilliant than they had known before; though even he is not quite as polished as a fastidious delicacy would require." Aretin's history of the Goths, which, though he is silent on the obligation, is chiefly translated from Procopius, passes for his best work. In the constellation of scholars who enjoyed the sunshine of favour in the palace of Cosmo de' Medici, Leonard Aretin was one of the oldest and most prominent. He died at an advanced age in 1444, and is one of the six illustrious dead who repose in the church of Santa Croce.†

Leonard
Aretin.

7. We come now to a very important event in literary history,—the resuscitation of the study of

Revival of
Greek language in
Italy.

* Mehus, p. 421.

† Madamede Stael unfortunately confounded this respectable scholar, in her *Corinne*, with Pietro

Aretino; I remember well that Ugo Foscolo could never contain his wrath against her for this mistake.

CHAP.
II.

Early
Greek
scholars of
Europe.

the Greek language in Italy. During the whole course of the middle ages we find scattered instances of scholars in the west of the Europe, who had acquired some knowledge of Greek; to what extent it is often a difficult question to determine. In the earlier and darker period, we begin with a remarkable circumstance, already mentioned, of our own ecclesiastical history. The infant Anglo-Saxon churches, desirous to give a national form to their hierarchy, solicited the Pope Vitalian to place an archbishop at their head. He made choice of Theodore, who not only brought to England a store of Greek manuscripts, but, through the means of his followers, imparted a knowledge of it to some of our countrymen. Bede, half a century afterwards, tells us, of course very hyperbolically, that there were still surviving disciples of Theodore and Adrian, who understood the Greek and Latin languages as well as their own.* From these he derived, no doubt, his own knowledge, which may not have been extensive; but we cannot expect more, in such very

* Hist. Eccles. l. v. c. 2. *Usque hodie supersunt ex eorum discipulis, qui Latinam Græcamque linguam æque ac propriam in qua nati sunt, norunt.* Bede's own knowledge of Greek is attested by his biographer Cuthbert; præter Latinam etiam Græcam comparaverat. He once, and possibly more often, uses a Greek word; but we must suspect his knowledge of it to have been trifling.

A manuscript in the British Museum (Cotton, Galba, i. 18.), is of some importance in relation to this, if it be truly referred to the eighth century. It contains the

Lord's prayer in Greek, written in Anglo-Saxon characters, and appears to have belonged to king Athelstan. Mr. Turner (Hist. of Angl.-Sax., vol. iii. p. 396.) has taken notice of this manuscript, but without mentioning its antiquity. The manner in which the words are divided show a perfect ignorance of Greek in the writer; but the Saxon is curious in another respect, as it proves the pronunciation of Greek in the eighth century to have been modern or Romanic, and not what we hold to be ancient.

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II.

unfavourable circumstances, than a superficial progress in so difficult a study. It is probable that the lessons of Theodore's disciples were not forgotten in the British and Irish monasteries. Alcuin has had credit, with no small likelihood, if not on positive authority, for an acquaintance with Greek*; and as he, and perhaps others from these islands, were active in aiding the efforts of Charlemagne for the restoration of letters, the slight tincture of Greek that we find in the schools founded by that emperor, may have been derived from their instruction. It is, however, an equally probable hypothesis, that it was communicated by Greek teachers, whom it was easy to procure. Charlemagne himself, according to Eginhard, could read, though he could not speak, the Greek language. Thegan reports the very same, in nearly the same words, of Louis the Debonair.† The former certainly intended, that it should be taught in some of his schools‡; and the Benedictines of St. Maur, in their long and laborious *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, have enumerated as many as seventeen persons within France, or at

Under
Charle-
magne and
his suc-
cessors.

* C'était un homme habile dans le Grec comme dans le Latin. *Hist. Litt. de la Fr.* iv. 8.

† The passages will be found in Eichhorn, *Allg. Gesch.* ii. 265. and 290. That concerning Charlemagne is quoted in many other books. Eginhard says in the same place, that Charles prayed in Latin as readily as in his own language; and Thegan, that Louis could speak Latin perfectly.

‡ Osnabrug has generally been named as the place where Charle-

magne peculiarly designed that Greek should be cultivated. It seems however, on considering the passage in the Capitularies usually quoted (Baluze, ii. 419.), to have been only one out of many. Eichhorn thinks that the existence of a Greek school at Osnabrug is doubtful, but that there is more evidence in favour of Saltsburg and Ratisbon. *Allg. Gesch. der Cultur*, ii. 383. The words of the Capitulary are, *Græcas et Latinas Scholas in perpetuum manere ordinavimus.*

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II.

least the dominions of the Carlovingian house, to whom they ascribe, on the authority of contemporaries, a portion of this learning.* These were all educated in the schools of Charlemagne, except the most eminent in the list, John Scotus Erigena, for whom Scotland and Ireland contend, the latter probably on the best grounds. It is not necessary by any means to suppose that he had acquired by travel the Greek tongue, which he possessed sufficiently to translate, though very indifferently, the works attributed in that age to Dionysius the Areopagite.† Most writers of the ninth century, according to the Benedictines, make use of some Greek words. It appears by a letter of the famous Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, who censures his nephew Hincmar of Laon for doing this affectedly, that glossaries, from which they picked those exotic flowers, were already in use. Such a glossary in Greek and Latin, compiled, under Charles the Bald, for the use of the church of Laon, was, at the date of the publication of this Benedictine History, near the middle of the last century, in the library of St. Germain des Prés.‡ We may thus perceive the means of giving the air of more learning than was actually possessed; and are not to infer from these sprinklings of Greek in mediæval writings, whether in their proper characters, or latinised, which is ra-

* Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. v. Launoy had commenced this enumeration in his excellent treatise on the schools of Charlemagne; but he has not carried it quite so far. See, too, Eichhorn, Allg. Gesch. ii. 420.; and Gesch. der Litt. i. 824. Meiners thinks

that Greek was better known in the ninth century, through Charlemagne's exertions, than for five hundred years afterwards. ii. 367.

† Eichhorn, ii. 227. Brucker. Guizot.

‡ Hist. Litt. de la France, vol. iv. Ducange, præf. in Glossar. p. 40.

ther more frequent, that the poets and profane, or even ecclesiastical, writers were accessible in a French or English monastery. Neither of the Hincmars seems to have understood it. Tiraboschi admits that he cannot assert any Italian writer of the ninth century to be acquainted with Greek.*

8. The tenth century furnishes not quite so many proofs of Greek scholarship. It was, however, studied by some brethren in the abbey of St. Gall, a celebrated seat of learning for those times, and the library of which still bears witness, in its copious collection of manuscripts, to the early intercourse between the scholars of Ireland and those of the continent. Baldric, bishop of Utrecht†, Bruno of Cologne, and Gerbert, besides a few more whom the historians of St. Maur record, possessed a tolerable acquaintance with the Greek language. They mention a fact that throws light on the means by which it might occasionally be learned. Some natives of that country, doubtless expatriated catholics, took refuge in the diocese of Toul, under the protection of the bishop, not long before 1000. They formed separate societies, performing divine service in their own language, and with their own rites.‡ It is probable, the Benedictines observe, that Humbert, afterwards a cardinal, acquired from them that knowledge of the language by which he distinguished himself in controversy with their countrymen.§ This great

In the
tenth and
eleventh
centuries,

* iii. 206.

† Baldric lived under Henry the Fowler; his biographer says: — Nullum fuit studiorum liberalium genus in omni Græca et La-

tina eloquentia quod ingenio sui vivacitatem aufugeret. Launoy, p. 117. Hist. Litt. vi. 50.

‡ Vol. vi. p. 57.

§ Vol. vii. p. 528.

CHAP.
II.

schism of the church, which the Latins deeply felt, might induce some to study a language, from which alone they could derive authorities in disputation with these antagonists. But it had also the more unequivocal effect of drawing to the west some of those Greeks who maintained their communion with the church of Rome. The emigration of these in the diocese of Toul is not a single fact of the kind; and it is probably recorded from the remarkable circumstance of their living in community. We find from a passage in Heric, a prelate in the reign of Charles the Bald, that this had already begun; at the commencement, in fact, of the great schism.* Greek bishops and Greek monks are mentioned as settlers in France during the early part of the eleventh century. This was especially in Normandy, under the protection of Richard II., who died in 1028. Even monks from Mount Sinai came to Rouen to share in his liberality.† The Benedictines ascribe the preservation of some taste for the Greek and oriental tongues to these strangers. The list, however, of the learned in them is very short, considering the erudition of these fathers, and their disposition to make the most of all they met with. Greek books are mentioned in the few libraries of which we read in the eleventh century.‡

* Ducange, præfat. in Glossar. p. 41.

† Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 69. 124. et alibi. A Greek manuscript in the royal library at Paris, containing the liturgy, according to the Greek ritual, was

written in 1022, by a monk named *Helie*, (they do not give the Latin name,) who seems to have lived in Normandy. If this stands for Elias, he was probably a Greek by birth.

‡ Id. p. 48.

9. The number of Greek scholars seems not much more considerable in the twelfth century, notwithstanding the general improvement of that age. The Benedictines reckon about ten names, among which we do not find that of St. Bernard.* They are inclined also to deny the pretensions of Abelard†; but, as that great man finds a very hostile tribunal in these fathers, we may pause about this, especially as they acknowledge Eloise to have understood both the Greek and Hebrew languages. She established a Greek mass for Whitsunday in the Paraclete convent, which was sung as late as the fifteenth century; and a Greek missal in Latin characters was still preserved there.‡ Heeren speaks more favourably of Abelard's learning, who translated passages from Plato.§ The pretensions of John of Salisbury are slighter; he seems proud of his Greek, but betrays gross ignorance in etymology.||

CHAP.
II.

In the
twelfth.

10. The thirteenth century was a more inauspicious period for learning; yet here we can boast, not only of John Basing, archdeacon of St. Albans, who returned from Athens about 1240, laden, if we are bound to believe this literally, with Greek books, but of Roger Bacon and Robert Grostête, bishop of Lincoln. It is admitted that Bacon had some acquaintance with Greek; and it

In the
thirteenth.

* Hist. Litt. de la France, pp. 94. 151. Macarius, abbot of St. Fleuri, is said to have compiled a Greek Lexicon, which has been several times printed under the name of Beatus Benedictus.

† Id. xii. 147.

‡ Id. xii. 642.

§ P. 204. His Greek was no

doubt rather scanty, and not sufficient to give him an insight into ancient philosophy; in fact, if his learning had been greater, he could only read such manuscripts as fell into his hands; and there were hardly any then in France.

|| Ibid. John derives analytica from *ανα* and *λεξις*.

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appears by a passage in Matthew Paris, that a Greek priest, who had obtained a benefice at St. Albans, gave such assistance to Grostête as enabled him to translate the testament of the twelve patriarchs into Latin.* This is a confirmation of what has been suggested above, as the probable means by which a knowledge of that language, in the total deficiency of scholastic education, was occasionally imparted to persons of unusual zeal for learning. And it leads us to another reflection, that by a knowledge of Greek, when we find it asserted of a mediæval theologian like Grostête, we are not to understand an acquaintance with the great classical authors, who were latent in eastern monasteries, but the power of reading some petty treatise of the fathers, or, as in this instance, an apocryphal legend, or at best, perhaps, some of the later commentators on Aristotle. Grostête was a man of considerable merit, but has had his share of applause.

Little appearance of it in the fourteenth century.

11. The titles of mediæval works are not unfrequently taken from the Greek language, as the *Polecraticon* and *Metalogicus* of John of Salisbury, or the *Philobiblon* of Richard Aungerville of Bury. In this little volume, written about 1348, I have

* Matt. Par. p. 520. See also Turner's *History of England*, iv. 180. It is said in some books that Grostête made a translation of Suidas. But this is to be understood merely of a legendary story found in that writer's *Lexicon*. Pegge's *Life of Grostête*, p. 291. The entire work he certainly could not have translated, nor is it at all credible that he had a copy of it. With respect to the doubt I have hinted in the text as

to the great number of manuscripts said to be brought to England by John Basing, it is founded on their subsequent disappearance. We find very few, if any, Greek manuscripts in England at the end of the fifteenth century.

Michael Scot, "the wizard of dreaded fame," pretended to translate Aristotle; but is charged with having appropriated the labours of one Andrew, a Jew, as his own. Meiners, ii. 664.

counted five instances of single Greek words. And, what is more important, Aungerville declares that he had caused Greek and Hebrew grammars to be drawn up for students.* But we have no other record of such grammars. It would be natural to infer from this passage, that some persons, either in France or England, were occupied in the study of the Greek language. And yet we find nothing to corroborate this presumption; all ancient learning was neglected in the fourteenth century; nor do I know that one man on this side of the Alps, except Aungerville himself, is reputed to have been versed in Greek during that period. I cannot speak positively as to Berchœur, the most learned man in France. The council of Vienne, indeed, in 1311, had ordered the establishment of professors in the Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Arabic languages, at Avignon, and in the universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, and Salamanca. But this decree remained a dead letter.

12. If we now turn to Italy, we shall find, as is not wonderful, rather more frequent instances of acquaintance with a living language, in common use with a great neighbouring people. Gradenigo, in an essay on this subject†, has endeavoured to refute what he supposes to be the universal opinion, that, the Greek tongue was first taught in Italy by Chrysoloras and Guarino at the end of the fourteenth century, contending that, from the eleventh inclusive, there are numerous instances of persons conversant with it; besides the evidence

Some traces
of Greek in
Italy.

* c. x.

† Ragionamento Istórico-critico sopra la letteratura Greco-Italiana. Brescia, 1759.

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afforded by inscriptions in Greek characters found in some churches, by the use of Greek psalters and other liturgical offices, by the employment of Greek painters in churches, and by the frequent intercourse between the two countries. The latter presumptions have in fact considerable weight; and those who should contend for an absolute ignorance of the Greek language, oral as well as written, in Italy, would go too far. The particular instances brought forward by Gradenigo are about thirty. Of these the first is Papias, who has quoted five lines of Hesiod.* Lanfranc had also a considerable acquaintance with the language.† Peter Lombard, in his *Liber Sententiarum*, the systematic basis of scholastic theology, introduces many Greek words, and explains them rightly.‡ But this list is not very long; and when we find the surname Bifarius given to one Ambrose of Bergamo in the eleventh century, on account of his capacity of speaking both languages, it may be conceived that the accomplishment was somewhat rare. Mehus, in his very learned life of Traversari, has mentioned two or three names, among whom is the Emperor Frederic II. (not indeed strictly an Italian), that do not appear in Gradenigo.§ But Tiraboschi conceives, on the other hand, that the latter has inserted some on insufficient grounds. Christine of Pisa is men-

* P. 37. These are very corruptly given, through the fault of a transcriber; for Papias has translated them into tolerable Latin verse.

† Hist. Litt. de la France, vii. 144.

‡ Meiners, iii. 11.

§ pp. 155. 217, &c. Add to these authorities, Muratori, dissert. 44.; Brucker, iii. 644, 647.; Tiraboschi, v. 393.

tioned, I think, by neither ; she was the daughter of an Italian astronomer, but lived at the court of Charles V. of France, and was the most accomplished literary lady of that age.*

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13. The intercourse between Greece and the west of Europe, occasioned by commerce and by the crusades, had little or no influence upon literature. For, besides the general indifference to it in those classes of society which were thus brought into some degree of contact with the Eastern Empire, we must remember that, although Greek, even to the capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II., was a living language in that city, spoken by the superior ranks of both sexes with tolerable purity, it had degenerated among the common people, and almost universally among the inhabitants of the provinces and islands, into that corrupt form, or rather new language, which we call Romaic.† The progress of this innovation went on by steps very similar to those by which the Latin was transformed in the West, though it was not so rapid or

Corruption
of Greek
language
itself.

* Tiraboschi, v. 388., vouches for Christine's knowledge of Greek. She was a good poetess in French, and altogether a very remarkable person.

† Filelfo says, in one of his epistles, dated 1441, that the language spoken in Peloponnesus "*adeo est depravata, ut nihil omnino sapiat priscæ illius et eloquentissimæ Græciæ.*" At Constantinople the case was better ; "*viri eruditi sunt nonnulli, et culti mores, et sermo etiam nitidus.*" In a letter of Coluccio Salutato, near the end of the fourteenth century, he says that Plutarch had been translated *de Græco in Græcum vulgare.*

Mehus, p. 294. This seems to have been done at Rhodes. I quote this to remove any difficulty others may feel, for I believe the Romaic Greek is much older. The progress of corruption in Greek is sketched in the Quarterly Review, vol. xxii., probably by the pen of the Bishop of London. Its symptoms were very similar to those of Latin in the West ; abbreviation of words, and indifference to right inflexions. See also Col. Leake's Researches in the Morea. Eustathius has many Romaic words ; yet no one in the twelfth century had more learning.

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complete. A manuscript of the twelfth century, quoted by Du Cange from the royal library at Paris, appears to be the oldest written specimen of the modern Greek that has been produced; but the oral change had been gradually going forward for several preceding centuries.*

Character
of Byzan-
tine lite-
rature.

14. The Byzantine literature was chiefly valuable by illustrating, or preserving in fragments, the historians, philosophers, and, in some measure, the poets of antiquity. Constantinople and her empire produced abundantly men of erudition, but few of genius or of taste. But this erudition was now rapidly on the decline. No one was left in Greece, according to Petrarch, after the death of Leontius Pilatus, who understood Homer; words not, perhaps, to be literally taken, but expressive of what he conceived to be their general indifference to the poet: and it seems very probable that some ancient authors, whom we should most desire to recover, especially the lyric poets of the Doric and Æolic dialects, have perished, because they had become unintelligible to the transcribers of the lower empire; though this has also been ascribed to the scrupulousness of the clergy. An absorbing fondness for theological subtleties, far more trifling among the Greeks than in the schools of the West, conspired to produce a neglect of studies so remote as heathen poetry. Aurispa tells Ambrogio Traversari, that he found they cared little about profane literature. Nor had the Greek learning ever recovered the blow that the capture of Constantinople by the crusaders in 1204, and

* Du Cange, præfatio in Glossarium mediæ et infimæ Græcitatæ.

the establishment for sixty years of a Latin and illiterate dynasty, inflicted upon it.* We trace many classical authors to that period, of whom we know nothing later, and the compilations of ancient history by industrious Byzantines came to an end. Meantime the language, where best preserved, had long lost the delicacy and precision of its syntax; the true meaning of the tenses, moods, and voices of the verb was overlooked or guessed at; a kind of latinism, or something at least not ancient in structure and rhythm, shows itself in their poetry; and this imperfect knowledge of their once beautiful language is unfortunately too manifest in the grammars of the Greek exiles of the fifteenth century, which have so long been the groundwork of classical education in Europe.

15. We now come to the proper period of the restoration of Greek learning. In the year 1339, Barlaam, a Calabrian by birth, but long resident in Greece, and deemed one of the most learned men of that age, was entrusted by the emperor Cantacuzenus with a mission to Italy.† Petrarch, in 1342, as Tiraboschi fixes the time, endeavoured to learn Greek from him, but found the task too arduous, or rather, had not sufficient opportunity to go on with it.‡ Boccaccio, some years afterwards, suc-

Petrarch
and Boc-
cace learn
Greek.

* An enumeration, and it is a long one, of the Greek books not wholly lost till this time will be found in Heeren, p. 125.; and also in his *Essai sur les Croisades*.

† Mehus. Tiraboschi, v. 398. De Sade, i. 406. Biog. Univ. Barlaam.

‡ *Incubueram alacri spe magno-
que desiderio, sed peregrinæ lin-*

*guæ novitas et festina præceptoris
absentia præciderunt propositum
meum.* It has been said, and prob-
ably with some truth, that Greek,
or at least a sort of Greek, was
preserved as a living language in
Calabria; not because Greek colo-
nies had once been settled in some
cities, but because that part of
Italy was not lost to the Byzan-

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ceeded better with the help of Leontius Pilatus, a Calabrian also by birth*, who made a prose translation of Homer for his use, and for whom he is said to have procured a public appointment as teacher of the Greek language at Florence, in 1361. He remained here about three years; but we read nothing of any other disciples; and the man himself was of too unsocial and forbidding a temper to conciliate them.†

Few acquainted with the language in their time.

16. According to a passage in one of Petrarch's letters, fancifully addressed to Homer, there were at that time not above ten persons in Italy who knew how to value the old father of the poets; five at the most in Florence, one in Bologna, two in Verona, one in Mantua, one in Perugia, but none at Rome.‡ Some pains have been thrown away in attempting to retrieve the names of those to whom he alludes: the letter shows at least, that there was very little pretension to Greek learning in his age; for I am not convinced that he meant all these ten persons, among whom he seems to reckon himself, to be considered as skilled in that tongue. And we must not be led away by the instances partially collected by Gradenigo out of the

tine empire till about three centuries before the time of Barlaam and Pilatus. They, however, had gone to a better source; and I should have great doubts as to the goodness of Calabrian Greek in the fourteenth century, which of course are not removed by the circumstance that in some places the church service was performed in that language. Heeren, I find, is of the same opinion. p. 287.

* Many have taken Pilatus for a native of Thessalonica: even Hody has fallen into this mistake, but Petrarch's letters show the contrary.

† Hody de Græcis illustribus, p. 2. Mehus, p. 273. De Sade, iii. 625. Gibbon has erroneously supposed this translation to have been made by Boccace himself.

‡ De Sade, iii. 627. Tiraboschi, v. 371. 400. Heeren, 294.

whole mass of extant records, to lose sight of the great general fact, that Greek literature was lost in Italy for 700 years, in the words of Leonard Aretin, before the arrival of Chrysoloras. The language is one thing, and the learning contained in it is another. For all the purposes of taste and erudition, there was no Greek in western Europe during the middle ages: if we look only at the knowledge of bare words, we have seen there was a very slender portion.

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17. The true epoch of the revival of Greek literature in Italy, these attempts of Petrarch and Boccace having produced no immediate effect, though they evidently must have excited a desire for learning, cannot be placed before the year 1395 *, when Emanuel Chrysoloras, previously known as an ambassador from Constantinople to the western powers, in order to solicit assistance against the Turks, was induced to return to Florence as public teacher of Greek. He passed from thence to various Italian universities, and became the preceptor of several early Hellenists. †

It is taught
by Chryso-
loras about
1395.

* This is the date fixed by Tiraboschi; others refer it to 1391, 1396, 1397, or 1399.

† Literæ per hujus belli interapedines mirabile quantum per Italiam increvere; accedente tunc primum cognitione literarum Græcarum quæ septingentis jam annis apud nostros homines desierant esse in usu. Retulit autem Græcam disciplinam ad nos Chrysoloras Byzantinus, vir domi nobilis ac literarum Græcarum peritissimus. Leonard Aretin apud Hody, p. 28. See also an extract from Manetti's life of Boccace, in Hody, p. 61.

Satis constat Chrysoloram Byzantinum transmarinam illam disciplinam in Italiam advenisse; quo doctore adhibito primum nostri homines totius exercitationis atque artis ignari, cognitæ Græcis literis, vehementer sese ad eloquentiæ studia excitaverunt. P. Cortesius de hominibus doctis, p. 6.

The first visit of Chrysoloras had produced an inclination towards the study of Greek. Coluccio Salutato, in a letter to Demetrius Cydonius, who had accompanied Chrysoloras, says, Multorum animos ad linguam Hella-

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II.His dis-
ciples.

The first, and perhaps the most eminent and useful of these, was Guarino Guarini of Verona, born in 1370. He acquired his knowledge of Greek under Chrysoloras at Constantinople, before the arrival of the latter in Italy. Guarino, upon his return, became professor of rhetoric, first at Venice and other cities of Lombardy, then at Florence, and ultimately at Ferrara, where he closed a long life of unremitting and useful labour in 1460. John Aurispa of Sicily came to the field rather later, but his labours were not less profitable. He brought back to Italy 238 manuscripts from Greece about 1423, and thus put his country in possession of authors hardly known to her by name. Among these were Plato, Plotinus, Diodorus, Arrian, Dio Cassius, Strabo, Pindar, Callimachus, Appian. After teaching Greek at Bologna and Florence, Aurispa also ended a length of days under the patronage of the house of Este, at Ferrara. To these may be added, in the list of public instructors in Greek before 1440, Filelfo, a man still more known by his virulent disputes with his contemporaries than by his learning; who, returning from Greece in 1427, laden with manuscripts, was not long afterwards appointed to the chair of rhetoric, that is, of Latin

dum accendisti, ut jam videre viderar multos fore Græcarum literarum post paucorum annorum curricula non tepide studiosos. Mehus, p. 356.

The *Erotemata* of Chrysoloras, an introduction to Greek grammar, was the first, and long the only, channel to a knowledge of that

language, save oral instruction. It was several times printed, even after the grammars of Gaza and Lascaris had come more into use. An abridgment by Guarino of Verona, with some additions of his own, was printed at Ferrara in 1509. Ginguéné, iii. 283.

and Greek philology, at Florence; and, according to his own account, excited the admiration of the whole city.* But his vanity was excessive, and his contempt of others not less so. Poggio was one of his enemies; and their language towards each other is a noble specimen of the decency with which literary and personal quarrels were carried on.† It has been observed, that Gianozzo Manetti, a contemporary scholar, is less known than others, chiefly because the mildness of his character spared him the altercations to which they owe a part of their celebrity.‡

* *Universa in me civitas conversa est; omnes me diligunt, honorant omnes, ac summis laudibus in cœlum efferunt. Meum nomen in ore est omnibus. Nec primarii cives modo, cum per urbem incedo, sed nobilissimæ feminae honorandi mei gratiâ loco cedunt, tantumque mihi deferunt, ut me pudeat tanti cultus. Auditores sunt quotidie ad quadringentos, vel fortassis et amplius; et hi quidem magna in parte viri grandiores et ex ordine senatorio. Philiph. Epist. ad ann. 1428.*

† *Shepherd's Life of Poggio, ch. vi. and viii.*

‡ Hody was perhaps the first who threw much light on the early studies of Greek in Italy; and his book, *De Græcis illustribus, linguæ Græcæ instauratoribus*, will be read with pleasure and advantage by every lover of literature; though Mehus, who came with more exuberant erudition to the subject, has pointed out a few errors. But more is to be found as to its native cultivators, Hody being chiefly concerned with the Greek refugees, in Bayle, Fabri-

cus, Nicéron, Mehus, Zeno, Tiraboschi, Meiners, Roscoe, Heeren, Shepherd, Corniani, Ginguéné, and the *Biographie Universelle*, whom I name in chronological order.

As it is impossible to dwell on the subject within the limits of these pages, I will refer the reader to the most useful of the above writings, some of which, being merely biographical collections, do not give the connected information he would require. The lives of Poggio and of Lorenzo de' Medici will make him familiar with the literary history of Italy for the whole fifteenth century, in combination with public events, as it is best learned. I need not say that Tiraboschi is a source of vast knowledge to those who can encounter two quarto volumes. Ginguéné's third volume is chiefly borrowed from these, and may be read with great advantage. Finally, a clear, full, and accurate account of those times will be found in Heeren. It will be understood that all these works relate to the revival of Latin as well as Greek.

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Translations from
Greek into
Latin.

18. Many of these cultivators of the Greek language devoted their leisure to translating the manuscripts brought into Italy. The earliest of these was Peter Paul Vergerio (commonly called the elder, to distinguish him from a more celebrated man of the same names in the sixteenth century), a scholar of Chrysoloras, but not till he was rather advanced in years. He made, by order of the emperor Sigismund, and, therefore, not earlier than 1410, a translation of Arrian, which is said to exist in the Vatican library; but we know little of its merits.* A more renowned person was Ambrogio Traversari, a Florentine monk of the order of Camaldoli, who employed many years in this useful labour. No one of that age has left a more respectable name for private worth: his epistles breathe a spirit of virtue, of kindness to his friends, and of zeal for learning. In the opinion of his contemporaries, he was placed, not quite justly, on a level with Leonard Aretin for his knowledge of Latin, and he surpassed him in Greek.† Yet neither his translations, nor those of his contemporaries, Guarino of Verona, Poggio, Leonardo Aretino, Filelfo, who with several others, rather before

* Biogr. Univ., Vergerio. He seems to have written very good Latin, if we may judge by the extracts in Corniani, ii. 61.

† The *Hodopæricon* of Traversari, though not of importance as a literary work, serves to prove, according to Bayle (Camaldoli, note D.), that the author was an honest man, and that he lived in a very corrupt age. It is an account of the visitation of some convents belonging to his order.

The life of Ambrogio Traversari has been written by Mehus very copiously, and with abundant knowledge of the times: it is a great source of the literary history of Italy. There is a pretty good account of him in Nicéron, vol. xix., and a short one in Roscoe; but the fullest biography of the man himself will be found in Meiners, *Lebenbeschreibungen berühmter Männer*, vol. ii. pp. 222—307.

1440, or not long afterwards, rendered the historians and philosophers of Greece familiar to Italy, can be extolled as correct, or as displaying what is truly to be called an knowledge of either language. Vossius, Casaubon, and Huet speak with much dispraise of most of these early translations from Greek into Latin. The Italians knew not enough of the original, and the Greeks were not masters enough of Latin. Gaza, upon the whole, than whom no one is more successful, says Erasmus, whether he renders Greek into Latin, or Latin into Greek, is reckoned the most elegant, and Argyropulus the most exact. But George of Trebizond, Filelfo, Leonard Aretin, Poggio, Valla, Perotti, are rather severely dealt with by the sharp critics of later times.* For this reproach does not fall only on the scholars of the first generation, but on their successors, except Politian, down nearly to the close of the fifteenth century. Yet, though it is necessary to point out the deficiencies of classical erudition at this time, least the reader should hastily conclude, that the praises bestowed upon

* Baillet, Jugemens des Savans, ii. 376, &c. Blount, Censura Auctorum, in nominibus nuncupatis. Hody, sæpies. Nicéron, vol. ix. in Perotti. See also a letter of Erasmus in Jortin's Life, ii. 425.

Filelfo tells us of a perplexity into which Ambrogio Traversari and Carlo Marsuppini, perhaps the two principal Greek scholars in Italy after himself and Guarino, were thrown by this line of Homer :—

Βούλομαι ἐγὼ λαὸν σόνον ἔμμεναι, ἢ ἀπόλεισθαι.

The first thought it meant *populum aut saluum esse aut perire*; which Filelfo justly calls, *inepta interpretatio et prava*. Marsuppini said ἡ ἀπόλεισθαι was, *aut ipsum perire*. Filelfo, after exulting over them, gives the true meaning. Philolph. Epist. ad ann. 1440.

Traversari complains much, in one of his letters, of the difficulty he found in translating Diogenes Laertius, lib. vii. epist. ii.; but Meiners, though admitting many errors, thinks this one of the best among the early translations. ii. 290.

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it are less relative to the previous state of ignorance, and the difficulties with which that generation had to labour, than they really are, this cannot affect our admiration and gratitude towards men who, by their diligence and ardour in acquiring and communicating knowledge, excited that thirst for improvement, and laid those foundations of it, which rendered the ensuing age so glorious in the annals of literature.

Public encouragement delayed.

19. They did not uniformly find any great public encouragement in the early stages of their teaching. On the contrary, Aurispa met with some opposition to philological literature at Bologna.* The civilians and philosophers were pleased to treat the innovators as men who wanted to set showy against solid learning. Nor was the state of Italy and of the papacy, during the long schism, very favourable to their object. Ginguéné remarks, that patronage was more indispensable in the fifteenth century than it had been in the last. Dante and Petrarch shone out by a paramount force of genius, but the men of learning required the encouragement of power, in order to excite and sustain their industry.

But fully accorded before 1460.

20. That encouragement, however it may have been delayed, had been accorded before the year 1440. Eugenius IV. was the first pope who displayed an inclination to favour the learned. They found a still more liberal patron in Alfonso, king of Naples, who, first of all European princes, established the interchange of praise and pension,

* Tiraboschi, vii. 301.

both, however, well deserved, with Filelfo, Poggio, Valla, Beccatelli, and other eminent men. This seems to have begun before 1440, though it was more conspicuous afterwards until his death in 1458. The earliest literary academy was established at Naples by Alfonso, of which Antonio Beccatelli, more often called Panormita from his birth-place, was the first president, as Pontano was the second. Nicolas of Este, marquis of Ferrara, received literary men in his hospitable court. But none were so celebrated or useful in this patronage of letters as Cosmo de' Medici, the Pericles of Florence, who, at the period with which we are now concerned, was surrounded by Traversari, Niccolo Niccoli, Leonardo Aretino, Poggio; all ardent to retrieve the treasures of Greek and Roman learning. Filelfo alone, malignant and irascible, stood aloof from the Medicean party, and poured his venom in libels on Cosmo and the chief of his learned associates. Niccoli, a wealthy citizen of Florence, deserves to be remembered among these; not for his writings,—since he left none; but on account of his care for the good instruction of youth, which has made Meiners call him the Florentine Socrates, and for his liberality as well as diligence in collecting books and monuments of antiquity. The public library of St. Mark was founded on a bequest by Niccoli, in 1437, of his own collection of eight hundred manuscripts. It was, too, at his instigation, as has been said, and that of Traversari, that Cosmo himself, about this time, laid the foundation of

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Emigration
of learned
Greeks to
Italy.

that which, under his grandson, acquired the name of the Laurentian library.*

21. As the dangers of the eastern empire grew more imminent, a few that had still endeavoured to preserve in Greece the purity of their language, and the speculations of ancient philosophy, turned their eyes towards a haven that seemed to solicit the glory of protecting them. The first of these, that is well known, was Theodore Gaza, who fled from his birth-place Thessalonica, when it fell under the Turkish yoke in 1430. He rapidly acquired the Latin language by the help of Victorin of Feltre.† Gaza became afterwards, but not, perhaps, within the period to which this chapter is limited, rector of the university of Ferrara. In this city, Eugenius IV. held a council in 1438, removed next year, on account of sickness, to Florence, in order to reconcile the Greek and Latin churches. Though it is well known, that the appearances of success which attended this hard bargain of the strong with the weak were very fallacious, the presence of several Greeks, skilled in their own language, and even in their ancient philosophy, Pletho, Bessarion, Gaza, stimulated the noble love of truth and science that burned in the bosoms of enlightened Italians. Thus, in 1440, the spirit of ancient learning was already diffused on that side the Alps: the Greek language might be

* I refer to the same authorities, but especially to the life of Traversari in Meiners, *Lebensbeschreibungen*, ii. 294. The suffrages of older authors are collected by Baillet and Blount.

† Victorin perhaps exchanged instruction with his pupil; for we find by a letter of Traversari (p. 421. edit. Mehus), that he was himself teaching Greek in 1433.

learned in at least four or five cities, and an acquaintance with it was a recommendation to the favour of the great ; while the establishment of universities at Pavia, Turin, Ferrara, and Florence, since the beginning of the present century, or near the close of the last, bore witness to the generous emulation which they served to redouble and concentrate.

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22. It is an interesting question, What were the causes of this enthusiasm for antiquity which we find in the beginning of the fifteenth century ?—a burst of public feeling that seems rather sudden, but prepared by several circumstances that lie farther back in Italian history. The Italians had for some generations learned more to identify themselves with the great people that had subdued the world. The fall of the house of Swabia, releasing their necks from a foreign yoke, had given them a prouder sense of nationality ; while the name of Roman emperor was systematically associated by one party with ancient tradition ; and the study of the civil law, barbarously ignorant as its professors often were, had at least the effect of keeping alive a mysterious veneration for antiquity. The monuments of ancient Italy were perpetual witnesses ; their inscriptions were read ; it was enough that a few men like Petrarch should animate the rest ; it was enough that learning should become honourable, and that there should be the means of acquiring it. The story of Rienzi, familiar to every one, is a proof what enthusiasm could be kindled by ancient recollections. Meantime the laity became better instructed ; a mixed race, ecclesiastics, but

Causes of
enthusiasm
for anti-
quity in
Italy.

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not priests, and capable alike of enjoying the benefits of the church, or of returning from it to the world, were more prone to literary than theological pursuits. The religious scruples which had restrained churchmen, in the darker ages, from perusing heathen writers, by degrees gave way, as the spirit of religion itself grew more objective, and directed itself more towards maintaining the outward church in its orthodoxy of profession, and in its secular power, than towards cultivating devout sentiments in the bosom.

Advanced
state of
society.

23. The principal Italian cities became more wealthy and more luxurious after the middle of the thirteenth century. Books, though still very dear, comparatively with the present value of money, were much less so than in other parts of Europe.* In Milan, about 1300, there were fifty persons who lived by copying them. At Bologna, it was also a regular occupation at fixed prices.† In this state of social prosperity, the keen relish of Italy for intellectual excellence had time to

* Savigny thinks the price of books in the middle ages has been much exaggerated; and that we are apt to judge by a few instances of splendid volumes, which give us no more notion of ordinary prices than similar proofs of luxury in collectors do at present. Thousands of manuscripts are extant, and the sight of most of them may convince us, that they were written at no extraordinary cost. He then gives a long list of law books, the prices of which he has found recorded. *Gesch. des Römischen Rechts*, iii. 549. But unless this were accompanied with a better

standard of value than a mere monetary one, which last Savigny has given very minutely, it can afford little information. The impression left on my mind, without comparing these prices closely with those of other commodities, was that books were in real value very considerably dearer (that is, in the ratio of several units to one,) than at present, which is confirmed by many other evidences.

† Tiraboschi, iv. 72—80. The price for copying a bible was eighty Bolognese livres; three of which were equal to two gold florins.

develope itself. A style of painting appeared in the works of Giotto and his followers, rude and imperfect, according to the skilfulness of later times, but in itself pure, noble, and expressive, and well adapted to reclaim the taste from the extravagance of romance to classic simplicity. Those were ready for the love of Virgil, who had formed their sense of beauty by the figures of Giotto and the language of Dante. The subject of Dante is truly mediæval; but his style, the clothing of poetry, bears the strongest marks of his acquaintance with antiquity. The influence of Petrarch was far more direct, and has already been pointed out.

24. The love of Greek and Latin absorbed the minds of these Italian scholars, and effaced all regard to every other branch of literature. Their own language was nearly silent; few condescended so much as to write letters in it; as few gave a moment's attention to physical science, though we find it mentioned, perhaps as remarkable, in Victorin of Feltre, that he had some fondness for geometry, and had learned to understand Euclid.* But even in Latin they wrote very little that can be deemed worthy of remembrance, or even that can be mentioned at all. The ethical dialogues of Francis Barbaro, a noble Venetian, on the married life (*de re uxoria*) †, and of Poggio

Exclusive
study of
antiquity.

* Meiners, *Lebensbesch.* ii. 293.

† Barbaro was a scholar of Gasparin in Latin. He had probably learned Greek of Guarino, for it is said that, on the visit of the emperor John Paleologus to Italy in

1423, he was addressed by two noble Venetians, Leonardo Guistiniani and Francesco Barbaro, in as good language as if they had been born in Greece. André, iii. 33. The treatise *de re uxoria*, which was published about 1417,

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on nobility, are almost the only books that fall within this period, except declamatory invectives or panegyrics, and other productions of circumstance. Their knowledge was not yet exact enough to let them venture upon critical philology; though Niccolì and Traversari were silently occupied in the useful task of correcting the text of manuscripts, faulty beyond description in the later centuries. Thus we must consider Italy as still at school, active, acute, sanguine, full of promise, but not yet become really learned, or capable of doing more than excite the emulation of other nations.

Classical
learning in
France low.

25. But we find very little corresponding sympathy with this love of classical literature in other parts of Europe; not so much owing to the want of intercourse, as to a difference of external circumstances, and, still more, of national character and acquired habits. Clemangis, indeed, rather before the end of the fourteenth century, is said by Crevier to have restored the study of classical antiquity in France, after an intermission of two centuries*; and Eichhorn deems his style superior to that of most contemporary Italians.† Even the Latin verses of Clemangis are praised by the same author, as the first that had been tolerably written

made a considerable impression in Italy. Some account of it may be found in Shepherd's *Life of Poggio*, ch. iii. and in Corniani, ii. 137.; who thinks it the only work of moral philosophy in the fifteenth century, which is not a servile copy of some ancient system. He was grandfather of the more celebrated Hermolaus Barbarus.

* *Hist. de l'Université de Paris*, iii. 189.

† *Gesch. der Literatur*, ii. 242. Meiners (*Vergleich. der sitten*, iii. 33.) extols Clemangis in equally high terms. He is said to have read lectures on the rhetoric of Cicero and Aristotle. *Id.* ii. 647. Was there a translation of the latter so early?

on this side the Alps for two hundred years. But we do not find much evidence that he produced any effect upon Latin literature in France. The general style was as bad as before. Their writers employed not only the barbarous vocabulary of the schools, but even French words with Latin terminations adapted to them.* We shall see that the renovation of polite letters in France must be dated long afterwards. Several universities were established in that kingdom; but even if universities had been always beneficial to literature, which was not the case during the prevalence of scholastic disputation, the civil wars of one unhappy reign, and the English invasions of another, could not but retard the progress of all useful studies. Some Greeks, about 1430, are said to have demanded a stipend, in pursuance of a decree of the council of Vienne in the preceding century, for teaching their language in the university of Paris. The nation of France, one of the four into which that university was divided, assented to this suggestion; but we find no other steps taken in relation to it. In 1455, it is said, that the Hebrew language was publicly taught.†

26. Of classical learning in England we can tell no favourable story. The Latin writers of the fifteenth century, few in number, are still more insignificant in value; they possess scarce an ordinary knowledge of grammar; to say that they are full of barbarisms and perfectly inelegant, is hardly

Much
more so in
England.

* Bulaeus. Hist. Univ. Paris, apud Heeren, p. 118. † Crevier, iv. 43. Heeren, p. 121.

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necessary. The university of Oxford was not less frequented at this time than in the preceding century, though it was about to decline; but its pursuits were as nugatory and pernicious to real literature as before.* Poggio says, more than once, in writing from England about 1420, that he could find no good books, and is not very respectful to our scholars. "Men given up to sensuality we may find in abundance; but very few lovers of learning; and those barbarous, skilled more in quibbles and sophisms than in literature. I visited many convents; they were all full of books of modern doctors, whom we should not think worthy so much as to be heard. They have few works of the ancients, and those are much better with us. Nearly all the convents of this island have been founded within four hundred years: but that was not a period in which either learned men, or such books as we seek, could be expected, for they had been lost before."†

Library of
duke of
Gloucester.

27. Yet books began to be accumulated in our public libraries: Aungerville, in the preceding century, gave part of his collection to a college at Oxford; and Humphry, duke of Gloucester, bequeathed six hundred volumes, as some have said, or one hundred and twenty-nine only, according to another account, to that university.‡ But these

* No place was more discredited for bad Latin. "Oxoniensis loquendi mos" became a proverb. This means that, being disciples of Scotus and Ockham, the Oxonians talked their master's jargon.

† Pogg. Epist. p. 43. (edit. 1832.)

‡ The former number is given by Warton; the latter I find in a short tract on English monastic libraries (1831), by the Rev. Joseph Hunter. In this there is also a catalogue of the library in the priory of Bretton in Yorkshire, consisting of about 150 volumes.

books were not of much value in a literary sense, though some may have been historically useful. I am indebted to Heeren for a letter of thanks from the duke of Gloucester to Decembrio, an Italian scholar of considerable reputation, who had sent him a translation of Plato de Republica. It must have been written before July 1447, the date of Humphry's death, and was probably as favourable a specimen of our latinity as the kingdom could furnish.*

28. Among the Cisalpine nations, the German had the greatest tendency to literary improvement, as we may judge by subsequent events, rather than by much that was apparent so early as 1440. Their writers in Latin were still barbarous, nor had they partaken in the love of antiquity which actuated the Italians. But the German nation displayed its best characteristic,—a serious, honest, industrious disposition, loving truth and goodness, and glad to pursue whatever path seemed to lead to them. A proof of this character was given in an institution of considerable influence both upon learning and religion, the college, or brotherhood, of

Gerard
Groot's
college at
Deventer.

No date is given; but I suppose it was about the end of the fifteenth century.

* Hoc uno nos longe felicem judicamus, quod tu totque florentissimi viri Græcis et Latinis literis peritissimi, quot illic apud vos sunt nostris temporibus, habeantur, quibus nesciamus quid laudum digne satis possit excogitari. Mitto quod facundiam priscam illam et priscis viris dignam, quæ prorsus perierat, huic sæculo renovatis; nec id vobis satis fuit, et Græcas literas

scrutati estis, ut et philosophos Græcos et vivendi magistros, qui nostris jam oblitterati erant et occulti, reseratis, et eos Latinos facientes in propatulum adducitis. Heeren quotes this, p. 135., from Sassi de studiis Mediolanensibus. Warton also mentions the letter, ii. 388. The absurd idiom exemplified in "nos felicem judicamus" was introduced affectedly by the writers of the twelfth century. Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 146.

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Deventer, planned by Gerard Groot, but not built and inhabited till 1400, fifteen years after his death. The associates of this, called by different names, but more usually Brethren of the Life in Common (*Gemeineslebens*), or Good Brethren and Sisters, were dispersed in different parts of Germany and the Low Countries, but with their head college at Deventer. They bore an evident resemblance to the modern Moravians, by their strict lives, their community, at least a partial one, of goods, their industry in manual labour, their fervent devotion, their tendency to mysticism. But they were as strikingly distinguished from them by the cultivation of knowledge, which was encouraged in brethren of sufficient capacity, and promoted by schools both for primary and for enlarged education. "These schools were," says Eichhorn, "the first genuine nurseries of literature in Germany, so far as it depended on the knowledge of languages; and in them was first taught the Latin, and in the process of time the Greek and eastern tongues." * It will be readily understood, that Latin only could be taught in the period with which we are now concerned; and, according to Lambinet, the brethren did not begin to open public schools till near the middle of the century.† These schools continued to flourish, till the civil wars of the Low Countries and the progress of the Reformation broke them up. Groningen had also

* Meiners, *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter männer*, ii. 311—324. Lambinet, *Origines de l'Imprimerie*, ii. 170. Eichhorn, *Geschichte der Litteratur*, ii. 134.,

iii. 882. Revius, *Daventria Illustrata*. Mosheim, cent. xv. c. 2. § 22. Biogr. Univ., Gerard, Kempis. † *Origines de l'Imprimerie*, p. 160.

a school, St. Edward's, of considerable reputation. Thomas à Kempis, according to Meiners, whom Eichhorn and Heeren have followed, presided over a school at Zwoll, wherein Agricola, Hegius, Langius, and Dringeburg, the restorers of learning in Germany, were educated. But it seems difficult to reconcile this with known dates, or with other accounts of that celebrated person's history.* The brethren Gemeineslebens had forty-five houses in 1430, and in 1460 more than thrice the number. They are said by some to have taken regular vows, though I find a difference in my authorities as to this, and to have professed celibacy. They were bound to live by the labour of their hands, observing the ascetic discipline of monasteries, and not to beg; which made the mendicant orders their enemies. They were protected, however, against these malignant calumniators by the favour of the pope. The passages quoted by Revius, the historian of Deventer, do not quite bear out the reputation for love of literature which Eichhorn has given them; but they were much occupied in copying and binding books.† Their house at Bruxelles began to print books instead of copying them, in 1474.‡

29. We have in the last chapter made no mention of the physical sciences, because little was to be said, and it seemed expedient to avoid breaking the subject into unnecessary divisions. It is well

Physical
sciences in
middle
ages.

* Meiners, p. 323. Eichhorn, p. 137. Heeren, p. 145. Biog. Univ., Kempis. Revius, Davent. Illust.

† Daventria Illustrata, p. 35.
‡ Lambinet.

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known that Europe had more obligations to the Saracens in this, than in any other province of research. They indeed had borrowed much from Greece, and much from India; but it was through their language that it came into use among the nations of the west. Gerbert, near the end of the tenth century, was the first who, by travelling into Spain, learned something of Arabian science. A common literary tradition ascribes to him the introduction of their numerals, and of the arithmetic founded on them, into Europe. This has been disputed, and again re-asserted, in modern times.*

* See *Andrès*, the *Archæologia*, vol. viii., and the *Encyclopædias*, *Britannic* and *Metropolitan*, on one side, against Gerbert; *Montucla*, i. 502., and *Kästner*, *Geschichte der Mathematik*, i. 35. and ii. 695. in his favour. The latter relies on a well-known passage in William of Malmesbury concerning Gerbert: *Abacum certe primus a Saracenis rapiens, regulas dedit, quæ a sudantibus abacistis vix intelliguntur*; upon several expressions in his writings, and upon a manuscript of his geometry, seen and mentioned by *Pez*, who refers it to the twelfth century, in which Arabic numerals are introduced. It is answered, that the language of Malmesbury is indefinite, that Gerbert's own expressions are equally so, and that the copyist of the manuscript may have inserted the cyphers.

It is evident that the use of the numeral signs does not of itself imply an acquaintance with the Arabic calculation, though it was a necessary step to it. Signs bearing some resemblance to these (too great for accident) are found in MSS. of *Boethius*, and are published by *Montucla*, (vol. i.

planch. ii.) In one MS. they appear with names written over each of them, not Greek, or Latin, or Arabic, or in any known language. These singular names, and nearly the same forms, are found also in a manuscript well deserving of notice,—No. 343. of the *Arundel MSS.*, in the *British Museum*, and which is said to have belonged to a convent at *Mentz*. This has been referred by some competent judges to the twelfth, and by others to the very beginning of the thirteenth century. It purports to be an introduction to the art of multiplying and dividing numbers; quicquid ab abacistis excerpere potui, compendiose collegi. The author uses nine digits, but none for ten, or zero, as is also the case in the MS. of *Boethius*. *Sunt vero integri novem sufficientes ad infinitam multiplicationem, quorum nomina singulis sunt superjecta*. A gentleman of the *British Museum*, who had the kindness, at my request, to give his attention to this hitherto unknown evidence in the controversy, is of opinion that the rudiments, at the very least, of our numeration are indicated in it, and

It is sufficient to say here, that only a very unreasonable scepticism has questioned the use of Arabic numerals in calculation during the thirteenth century; the positive evidence on this side cannot be affected by the notorious fact, that they were not employed in legal instruments, or in ordinary accounts: such an argument indeed would be equally good in comparatively modern times. These numerals are found, according to Andrès, in Spanish manuscripts of the twelfth century; and, according both to him and Cossali, who speak from actual inspection, in the treatise of arithmetic and algebra by Leonard Fibonacci of Pisa, written in 1202.* This has never been printed. It is by far our earliest testimony to the knowledge of algebra in Europe; but Leonard owns that he learned it among the Saracens. "This author appears," says Hutton, or rather Cossali, from whom he borrows, "to be well skilled in the various ways of reducing equations to their final simple state by all the usual methods." His algebra includes the solution of quadratics.

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II.

Arabic
numerals
and
method.

30. In the thirteenth century, we find Arabian numerals employed in the tables of Alfonso X., king

Proofs of
them in
thirteenth
century.

that the author comes within one step of our present system, which is no other than supplying an additional character for zero. His ignorance of this character renders his process circuitous, as it does not contain the principle of juxtaposition for the purpose of summing; but it does contain the still more essential principle, a decuple increase of value for the

same sign, in a progressive series of location from right to left. I shall be gratified if this slight notice should cause the treatise, which is very short, to be published, or more fully explained.

* Montucla, whom several other writers have followed, erroneously places this work in the beginning of the fifteenth century.

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of Castile, published about 1252. They are said to appear also in the Treatise of the Sphere, by John de Sacro Bosco, probably about twenty years earlier; and there is an unpublished treatise, *De Algorismo*, ascribed to him, which treats expressly of this subject.* *Algorismus* was the proper name for the Arabic notation and method of reckoning. Matthew Paris, after informing us that John Basing first made Greek numeral figures known in England, observes, that in these any number may be represented by a single figure, which is not the case "in Latin, nor in Algorism."† It is obvious that in some few numbers only this is true of the Greek; but the passage certainly implies an acquaintance with that notation, which had obtained the name of *Algorism*. It cannot, therefore, be questioned that Roger Bacon knew these figures; yet he has, I apprehend, never mentioned them in his writings; for a calendar, bearing the date 1292, which has been blunderingly ascribed to him, is expressly declared to have been framed at Toledo. In the year 1282, we find a single Arabic figure 3 inserted in a public record; not only the first indisputable instance of their employment in Eng-

* Several copies of this treatise are in the British Museum. Montucla has erroneously said that this arithmetic of Sacro Bosco is written in verse. Wallis, his authority, informs us only that some verses, two of which he quotes, are subjoined to the treatise. This is not the case in the manuscripts I have seen. I should add, that only one of them bears the name of Sacro Bosco, and that in a later handwriting.

† Hic insuper magister Joannes figuras Græcorum numerales, et earum notitiam et significationes in Angliam portavit, et familiaribus suis declaravit. Per quas figuras etiam literæ repræsentantur. De quibus figuris hoc maxime admirandum, quod unica figura quilibet numerus representatur; quod non est in Latino, vel in Algorismo. Matt. Paris, A. D. 1252, p. 721.

land, but the only one of their appearance in so solemn an instrument.* But I have been informed that they have been found in some private documents before the end of the century. In the following age, though they were still by no means in common use among accountants, nor did they begin to be so till much later, there can be no doubt that mathematicians were thoroughly conversant with them, and instances of their employment in other writings may be adduced.†

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II.

Mathe-
matical
treatises.

31. Adelard of Bath, in the twelfth century, translated the elements of Euclid from the Arabic, and another version was made by Campanus in the next age. The first printed editions are of the latter. The writings of Ptolemy became known through the same channel; and the once celebrated treatise on the Sphere by John de Sacro Bosco (Holywood, or, according to Leland, Halifax) about the beginning of the thirteenth century, is said to be but an abridgment of the Alexandrian geometer.‡ It has been frequently printed, and was even thought worthy of a commentary by Clavius. Jordan of Namur (Nemorarius) near the same time, shows a considerable insight into the properties of numbers.§ Vitello, a native of Poland,

* Parliamentary Writs, i. 232., edited under the Record Commission, by Sir Francis Palgrave. It was probably inserted for want of room, not enough having been left for the word *numeral*. It will not be detected with ease, even by the help of this reference.

† Andrés, ii. 92., gives on the whole the best account of the progress of numerals. The article by Leslie in the *Encyclopædia Britan-*

nica is too dogmatical in denying their antiquity. That in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana*, by Mr. Peacock, is more learned. Montucla is as superficial as usual; and Kästner has confined himself to the claims of Gerbert, admitting which, he is too indifferent about subsequent evidence.

‡ Montucla, i. 506. Biogr. Univ. Kästner.

§ Montucla. Kästner.

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not long afterwards, first made known the principles of optics in a treatise in ten books, several times printed in the sixteenth century, and indicating an extensive acquaintance with the Greek and Arabian geometers. Montucla has charged Vitello with having done no more than compress and arrange a work on the same subject by Alhazen ; which Andrès, always partial to the Arabian writers, has not failed to repeat. But the author of an article on Vitello in the *Biographie Universelle* repels this imputation, which could not, he says, have proceeded from any one who had compared the two writers. A more definite judgment is pronounced by the laborious German historian of mathematics, Kästner. "Vitello," he says, "has with diligence and judgment collected, as far as lay in his power, what had been previously known ; and, avoiding the tediousness of Arabian verbosity, is far more readable, perspicuous, and methodical than Alhazen ; he has also gone much farther in the science."*

Roger
Bacon.

32. It seems hard to determine whether or not Roger Bacon be entitled to the honours of a discoverer in science ; that he has not described any instrument analogous to the telescope, is now generally admitted ; but he paid much attention to optics, and has some new and important notions on that subject. That he was acquainted with the explosive powers of gunpowder, it seems unreasonable to deny ; the mere detonation of nitre in

* *Gesch. der Mathem.* ii. 263. The true name is Vitello, as Playfair has remarked (*Dissertat. in En-* cycl. Brit.), but Vitellio is much more common. Kästner is correct, always copying the old editions.

contact with an inflammable substance, which of course might be casually observed, is by no means adequate to his expressions in the well-known passage on that subject.* But there is no ground for doubting, that the Saracens were already conversant with gunpowder.

33. The mind of Roger Bacon was strangely compounded of almost prophetic gleams of the future course of science, and the best principles of the inductive philosophy, with a more than usual credulity in the superstitions of his own time. Some have deemed him overrated by the nationality of the English.† But if we may have sometimes given him credit for discoveries to which he has only borne testimony, there can be no doubt of the originality of his genius. I have in another place remarked the singular resemblance he bears to lord Bacon, not only in the character of his philosophy, but in several coincidences of expression. This has since been followed up by a later writer‡ (with no knowledge, probably, of what I had written, since he does not allude to it), who plainly charges lord Bacon with having borrowed much, and with having concealed his obligations. The *Opus Majus* of Roger Bacon was not published till

His resemblance
to lord
Bacon.

* This has been suggested by Professor Leslie, in the article on arithmetic above quoted; a great chemical authority, but who had not taken the trouble to look at Bacon, and forgot that he mentions charcoal and sulphur as well as nitre.

† Meiners, of all modern historians of literature, is the least favourable to Bacon, on account

of his superstition, and credulity in the occult sciences. *Vergleichung der sitten*, ii. 710. and iii. 232. Heeren, p. 244., speaks more candidly of him. It is impossible, I think, to deny that credulity is one of the points of resemblance between him and his namesake.

‡ *Hist. of Middle Ages*, iii. 539. Forster's *Mahometanism Unveiled*, ii. 312.

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1733, but the manuscripts were not uncommon, and Selden had thoughts of printing the work. The quotations from the Franciscan and the Chancellor, printed in parallel columns by Mr. Forster, are sometimes very curiously similar; but he presses the resemblance too far; and certainly the celebrated distinction, in the *Novum Organum*, of four classes of *Idola* which mislead the judgment, does not correspond in meaning, as he supposes, with the causes of error assigned by Roger Bacon.

English
mathema-
ticians of
fourteenth
century.

34. The English nation was not at all deficient in mathematicians during the fourteenth century; on the contrary, no other in Europe produced nearly so many. But their works have rarely been published. The great progress of physical science, since the invention of printing, has rendered these imperfect treatises interesting only to the curiosity of a very limited class of readers. Thus Richard Suisset, or Swineshead, author of a book entitled the *Calculator*, of whom Cardan speaks in such language as might be applied to himself, is scarcely known, except by name, to literary historians; and though it has once been printed, the book is of the extremest rarity.* But the most conspicuous of our English geometers was Thomas Bradwardin, arch-

* The character of Suisset's book given by Brucker, iii. 852., who had seen it, does not seem to justify the wish of Leibnitz that it should be republished. It is a strange medley of arithmetical and geometrical reasoning with the scholastic philosophy. Kästner (*Geschichte der Mathematik*, i. 50.) seems not to have looked at Brucker, and, like Montucla, has a very slight notion of the nature

of Suisset's book. His suspicion that Cardan had never seen the book he so much extols, because he calls the author the *Calculator*, which is the title of the work itself, seems unwarrantable. Suisset probably had obtained the name from his book, which is not uncommon; and Cardan was not a man to praise what he had never read.

bishop of Canterbury ; yet more for his rank, and for his theological writings, than for the arithmetical and geometrical speculations which give him a place in science. Montucla, with a carelessness of which there are too many instances in his valuable work, has placed Bradwardin, who died in 1348, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, though his work was printed in 1495.*

35. It is certain that the phenomena of physical **Astronomy.** astronomy were never neglected ; the calendar was known to be erroneous, and Roger Bacon has even been supposed by some to have divined the method of its restoration, which has long after been adopted. The Arabians understood astronomy well, and their science was transfused more or less into Europe. Nor was astrology, the favourite superstition of both the eastern and western world, without its beneficial effect upon the observation and registering of the planetary motions. Thus too, **Alchemy.** alchemy, which, though the word properly means but chemistry, was generally confined to the mystery all sought to penetrate, the transmutation of metals into gold, led more or less to the processes by which a real knowledge of the component parts of substances has been attained.†

36. The art of medicine was cultivated with **Medicine.**

* It may be considered a proof of the attention paid to geometry in England, that two books of Euclid were read at Oxford about the middle of the fifteenth century. Churton's *Life of Smyth*, p. 151., from the University Register. We should not have expected to find this.

† I refer to Dr. Thomson's *His-*

tory of Chemistry for much curious learning on the alchemy of the Middle Ages. In a work like the present, it is impossible to follow up every subject ; and I think that a general reference to a book of reputation and easy accessibility, is better than an attempt to abridge it.

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great diligence by the Saracens both of the east and of Spain, but with little of the philosophical science that had immortalised the Greek school. The writings, however, of these masters were translated into Arabic; whether correctly or not, has been disputed among oriental scholars; and Europe derived her acquaintance with the physic of the mind and body, with Hippocrates as well as Aristotle, through the same channel. But the Arabians had eminent medical authorities of their own; Rhases, Avicenna, Albucazi, who possessed greater influence. In modern times, that is, since the revival of Greek science, the Arabian theories have been in general treated with much scorn. It is admitted, however, that pharmacy owes a long list of its remedies to their experience, and to their intimacy with the products of the east. The school of Salerno, established as early as the eleventh century*, for the study of medicine, from whence the most considerable writers of the next ages issued, followed the Arabians in their medical theory. But these are deemed rude, and of little utility at present.

Anatomy.

37. In the science of anatomy an epoch was made by the treatise of Mundinus, a professor at Bologna, who died in 1326. It is entitled *Anatome omnium humani corporis interiorum membrorum*. This book had one great advantage over those of Galen, that it was founded on the actual anatomy of the human body. For Galen is supposed to have only dissected apes, and judged of mankind

* Meiners refers it to the tenth, ii. 413.; and Tiraboschi thinks it may be as ancient, iii. 347.

by analogy; and though there may be reason to doubt whether this were altogether the case, it is certain that he had very little practice in human dissection. Mundinus seems to have been more fortunate in his opportunities of this kind than later anatomists, during the prevalence of a superstitious prejudice, have found themselves. His treatise was long the text-book of the Italian universities, till, about the middle of the sixteenth century, Mundinus was superseded by greater anatomists. The statutes of the university of Padua prescribed, that anatomical lecturers should adhere to the literal text of Mundinus. Though some have treated this writer as a mere copier of Galen, he has much, according to Portal, of his own. There were also some good anatomical writers in France during the fourteenth century.*

38. Several books of the later middle ages, sometimes of great size, served as collections of natural history, and, in fact, as encyclopædias of general knowledge. The writings of Albertus Magnus belong, in part, to this class. They have been collected, in twenty-one volumes folio, by the Dominican Peter Jammi, and published at Lyons in 1651. After setting aside much that is spurious, Albert may pass for the most fertile writer in the world. He is reckoned by some the founder of the schoolmen; but we mention him here as a compiler, from all accessible sources, of what physical knowledge had been accumulated in his time.

Encyclo-
pædic
works of
middle
ages.

* Tiraboschi, v. 209—244.; who is very copious for a non-medical writer. Portal, *Hist. de l'Anatomie*. Biogr. Univ., Mondino, Chauliac. Eichhorn, *Gesch. der Litt.* ii. 416—447.

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II.

Vincent of
Beauvais.

A still more comprehensive contemporary writer of this class was Vincent de Beauvais, in the *Speculum naturale*, morale, doctrinale et historiale, written before the middle of the thirteenth century. The second part of this vast treatise in ten volumes folio, usually bound in four, *Speculum morale*, seems not to be written by Vincent de Beauvais, and is chiefly a compilation from Thomas Aquinas, and other theologians of the same age. The first, or *Speculum naturale*, follows the order of creation as an arrangement; and after pouring out all the author could collect on the heavens and earth, proceeds to the natural kingdoms; and, finally, to the corporeal and mental structure of man. In the third part of this encyclopædia, under the title *Speculum doctrinale*, all arts and sciences are explained; and the fourth contains an universal history.* The sources of this magazine of knowledge are of course very multifarious. In the *Speculum naturale*, at which alone I have looked, Aristotle's writings, especially the history of animals, those of other ancient authors, of the Arabian physicians, and of all who had treated the same subjects in the middle ages, are brought together in a comprehensive, encyclopædic manner, and with vast industry, but with almost a studious desire, as we might now fancy, to accumulate absurd falsehoods. Vincent, like many, it must be owned, in much later times, through his haste to compile, does not give himself the trouble to understand what he copies. But, in fact, he relied

* Biogr. Univ., Vincentius Bellovacensis.

on others to make extracts for him, especially from the writings of Aristotle, permitting himself or them, as he tells us, to change the order, condense the meaning, and explain the difficulties.* It may be easily believed, that neither Vincent of Beauvais, nor his amanuenses, were equal to this work of abridging and transposing their authors. Andrès, accordingly, has quoted a passage from the *Speculum naturale*, and another to the same effect from Albertus Magnus, relating, no doubt, in the Arabian writer from whom they borrowed, to the polarity of the magnet, but so strangely turned into nonsense, that it is evident they could not have understood in the least what they wrote. Probably, as their language is nearly the same, they copied a bad translation.†

CHAP.
II.

Vincent of
Beauvais.

39. In the same class of compilation with the *Speculum* of Vincent of Beauvais, we may place some later works, the *Trésor* of Brunetto Latini, written in French about 1280, the *Reductorium*, *Repertorium*, et *Dictionarium morale* of Berchorius, or Berchœur, a monk, who died at Paris in 1362‡, and a treatise by Bartholomew Glanvil, *De proprietatibus rerum*, soon after that time. Reading all they could find, extracting from all they read, digesting their extracts under some natural, or, at

Berchorius.

* A quibusdam fratribus excerpta susceperam; non eodem penitus verborum schemate, quo in originalibus suis jacent, sed ordine plerumque transposito, non nunquam etiam mutata perpaululum ipsorum verborum forma, manente tamen auctoris sententia; prout ipsa vel prolixitatis abbre-

viandæ vel multitudinis in unam colligendæ, vel etiam obscuritatis explanandæ necessitas exigebat.

† Andrès, ii. 112. See also xiii. 141.

‡ This book, according to De Sade, *Vie de Pétrarque*, iii. 550., contains a few good things among many follies. I have never seen it.

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II.

worst, alphabetical classification, these laborious men gave back their studies to the world with no great improvement of the materials, but sometimes with much convenience in their disposition. This, however, depended chiefly on their ability as well as diligence; and in the mediæval period, the want of capacity to discern probable truth was a very great drawback from the utility of their compilations.

Spanish
ballads.

40. It seems to be the better opinion, that very few only of the Spanish romances or ballads founded on history or legend, so many of which remain, belong to a period anterior to the fifteenth century. One may be excepted, which bears the name of Don Juan Manuel, who died in 1364.* Most of them should be placed still lower. Sanchez has included none in his collection of Spanish poetry, limited by its title to that period; though he quotes one or two fragments which he would refer to the fourteenth century.† Some, however, have conceived, perhaps with little foundation, that several, in the general collections of romances, have been modernised in language from more ancient lays. They have all a highly chivalrous character; every sentiment congenial to that institution, heroic courage, unsullied honour, generous pride, faithful

* Don Juan Manuel, a prince descended from Ferdinand III., was the most accomplished man whom Spain produced in his age. One of the earliest specimens of Castilian prose, *El Conde Lucanor*, places him high in the literature of his country. It is a moral fiction, in which, according to the custom of novelists, many other tales are interwoven. "In every

passage of the book," says Bouterwek, "the author shows himself a man of the world and an observer of human nature."

† The Marquis of Santillana, early in the fifteenth century, wrote a short letter on the state of poetry in Spain to his own time. Sanchez has published this with long and valuable notes.

love, devoted loyalty, were displayed in Castilian verse, not only in their real energy, but sometimes with an hyperbolical extravagance to which the public taste accommodated itself, and which long continued to deform the national literature. The ballad of the Conde de Alarcos, which may be found in Bouterwek, or in Sismondi, and seems to be one of the most ancient, will serve as a sufficient specimen. *

41. The very early poetry of Spain (that published by Sanchez) is marked by a rude simplicity, a rhythmical, and not very harmonious versification, and, especially in the ancient poem of the Cid, written, probably, before the middle of the twelfth century, by occasional vigour and spirit. This poetry is in that irregular Alexandrine measure, which, as has been observed, arose out of the Latin pentameter. It gave place in the fifteenth century to a dactylic measure, called *versos de arte mayor*, generally of eleven syllables, the first, fourth, seventh, and tenth being accented, but subject to frequent licences, especially that of an additional short syllable at the beginning of the line. But the favourite metre in lyric songs and romances was the redondilla, the type of which was a line of four trochees, requiring, however,

Metres of
Spanish
poetry.

* Bouterwek's History of Spanish and Portuguese Poetry, i. 55. See also Sismondi, *Littérature du Midi*, iii. 228., for the romance of the Conde de Alarcos.

Sismondi refers it to the fourteenth century; but perhaps no strong reason for this could be given. I find, however, in the *Cancionero General*, a "romance

viejo," containing the first two lines of the Conde de Alarcos, continued on another subject. It was not uncommon to build romances on the stocks of old ones, taking only the first lines; several other instances occur among those in the *Cancionero*, which are not numerous.

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alternately, or at the end of a certain number, one deficient in the last syllable, and consequently throwing an emphasis on the close. By this a poem was sometimes divided into short stanzas, the termination of which could not be mistaken by the ear. It is no more, where the lines of eight and seven syllables alternate, than that English metre with which we are too familiar to need an illustration. Bouterwek has supposed that this alternation, which is nothing else than the trochaic verse of Greek and Latin poetry, was preserved traditionally in Spain from the songs of the Roman soldiers. But it seems by some Arabic lines which he quotes, in common characters, that the Saracens had the line of four trochees, which, in all languages where syllables are strongly distinguished in time and emphasis, has been grateful to the ear. No one can fail to perceive the sprightliness and grace of this measure, when accompanied by simple melody. The lighter poetry of the southern nations is always to be judged with some regard to its dependence upon a sister art. It was not written to be read, but to be heard; and to be heard in the tones of song, and with the notes of the lyre or the guitar. Music is not at all incapable of alliance with reasoning or descriptive poetry; but it excludes many forms which either might assume, and requires a rapidity as well as intense-ness of perception, which language cannot always convey. Hence the poetry designed for musical accompaniment is sometimes unfairly derided by critics, who demand what it cannot pretend to give; but it is still true, that, as it cannot give all which

metrical language is able to afford, it is not poetry of the very highest class.

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II.

Consonant
and assonant
rhymes.

42. The Castilian language is rich in perfect rhymes. But in their lighter poetry the Spaniards frequently contented themselves with *assonances*, that is, with the correspondence of final syllables, wherein the vowel alone was the same, though with different consonants, as *duro* and *humo*, *boca* and *cosa*. These were often intermingled with perfect or consonant rhymes. In themselves, unsatisfactory as they may seem at first sight to our prejudices, there can be no doubt but that the assonances contained a musical principle, and would soon give pleasure to and be required by the ear. They may be compared to the alliteration so common in the northern poetry, and which constitutes almost the whole regularity of some of our oldest poems. But though assonances may seem to us an indication of a rude stage of poetry, it is remarkable that they belong chiefly to the later period of Castilian lyric poetry, and that consonant rhymes, frequently with the recurrence of the same syllable, are reckoned, if I mistake not, a presumption of the antiquity of a romance.*

Nature of
the glosa.

43. An analogy between poetry and music, extending beyond the mere laws of sound, has been ingeniously remarked by Bouterwek in a very favourite species of Spanish composition, the *glosa*. In this a few lines, commonly well known and simple, were glosed, or paraphrased, with as much variety and originality as the poet's ingenuity

* Bouterwek's Introduction. translation, p. 288. The assonance Velasquez, in Dieze's German is peculiar to the Spaniards.

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could give, in a succession of stanzas, so that the leading sentiment should be preserved in each, as the subject of an air runs through its variations. It was often contrived that the chief words of the glosed lines should recur separately in the course of each stanza. The two arts being incapable of a perfect analogy, this must be taken as a general one; for it was necessary that each stanza should be conducted so as to terminate in the lines, or a portion of them, which form the subject of the gloss.*. Of these artificial, though doubtless, at the time, very pleasing compositions, there is nothing, as far as I know, to be found beyond the Peninsula†; though, in a general sense, it may be said, that all lyric poetry, wherein a burthen or repetition of leading verses recurs, must originally be founded on the same principle, less artfully and musically developed. The burthen of a song can only be an impertinence, if its sentiment does not pervade the whole.

The Cancionero General.

44. The Cancionero General, a collection of Spanish poetry written between the age of Juan de la Mena, near the beginning of the fifteenth century, and its publication by Castillo in 1517, contains the productions of one hundred and thirty-six poets, as Bouterwek says; and in the edition of 1520 I have counted one hundred and thirty-nine. There is also much anonymous. The volume is in two hundred and three folios,

* Bouterwek, p. 118.

† They appear with the name Grosas in the Cancioneiro Geral of Resende; and there seems, as

I have observed already, to be something much of the same kind in the older Portuguese collection of the thirteenth century.

and includes compositions by Villena, Santillana, and the other poets of the age of John II., besides those of later date. But I find also the name of Don Juan Manuel, which, if it means the celebrated author of the *Conde Lucanor*, must belong to the fourteenth century, though the preface of *Castillo* seems to confine his collection to the age of *Mena*. A small part only are strictly love songs (*canciones*); but the predominant sentiment of the larger portion is amatory. Several romances occur in this collection; one of them is Moorish, and, perhaps, older than the capture of *Granada*; but it was long afterwards that the Spanish romancers habitually embellished their fictions with Moorish manners. These romances, as in the above instance, were sometimes glosed, the simplicity of the ancient style readily lending itself to an expansion of the sentiment. Some that are called romances contain no story; as the *Rosa Fresca* and the *Fonte Frida*, both of which will be found in *Bouterwek* and *Sismondi*.

45. "Love songs," says *Bouterwek*, "form by far the principal part of the old Spanish *cancioneros*. To read them regularly through would require a strong passion for compositions of this class, for the monotony of the authors is interminable. To extend and spin out a theme as long as possible, though only to seize a new modification of the old ideas and phrases, was, in their opinion, essential to the truth and sincerity of their poetic effusions of the heart. That loquacity, which is an hereditary fault of the Italian *canzone*, must also

Bouterwek's character of Spanish songs.

CHAP.
II.

be endured in perusing the amatory flights of the Spanish redondillas, while in them the Italian correctness of expression would be looked for in vain. From the desire, perhaps, of relieving their monotony by some sort of variety, the authors have indulged in even more witticisms and plays of words than the Italians, but they also sought to infuse a more emphatic spirit into their compositions than the latter. The Spanish poems of this class exhibit, in general, all the poverty of the compositions of the troubadours, but blend with the simplicity of these bards the pomp of the Spanish national style in its utmost vigour. This resemblance to the troubadour songs was not, however, produced by imitation; it arose out of the spirit of romantic love, which at that period, and for several preceding centuries, gave to the south of Europe the same feeling and taste. Since the age of Petrarch, this spirit had appeared in classical perfection in Italy. But the Spanish amatory poets of the fifteenth century had not reached an equal degree of cultivation; and the whole turn of their ideas required rather a passionate than a tender expression. The sighs of the languishing Italians became cries in Spain. Glowing passion, despair, and violent ecstasy were the soul of the Spanish love songs. The continually recurring picture of the contest between reason and passion is a peculiar characteristic of these songs. The Italian poets did not attach so much importance to the triumph of reason. The rigidly moral Spaniard was, however, anxious to be wise even in the midst of his folly. But this obtrusion of wisdom in an im-

proper place frequently gives an unpoetical harshness to the lyric poetry of Spain, in spite of all the softness of its melody." *

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46. It was in the reign of John II., king of Castile from 1407 to 1454, that this golden age of lyric poetry commenced.† A season of peace and regularity, a monarchy well limited, but no longer the sport of domineering families, a virtuous king, a minister too haughty and ambitious, but able and resolute, were encouragements to that light strain of amorous poetry which a state of ease alone can suffer mankind to enjoy. And Portugal, for the whole of this century, was in as flourishing a condition as Castile during this single reign. But we shall defer the mention of her lyric poetry, as it seems chiefly to be of a later date. In the court of John II. were found three men, whose names stand high in the early annals of Spanish poetry,—the marquisses of Villena and Santillana, and Juan de Mena. But, except for their zeal in the cause of letters, amidst the dissipations of a court, they have no pretensions to compete with some of the obscure poets to whom we owe the romances of chivalry. A desire, on the contrary, to show needless learning, and to astonish the vulgar by an ap-

Poets of
his court.

* Vol. i. p. 109.

† Velasquez, pp. 165. 442. (in Dieze), mentions, what has escaped Bouterwek, a more ancient Cancionero than that of Castillo, compiled in the reign of John II., by Juan Alfonso de Baena, and hitherto, or at least in his time, unpublished. As it is entitled Cancionero di Poetas Antiguos, it may be supposed to contain some

earlier than the year 1400. I am inclined to think, however, that few would be found to ascend much higher. I do not find the name of Don Juan Manuel, which occurs in the Cancionero of Castillo. A copy of this manuscript Cancionero of Baena, was lately sold (1836), among the MSS. of Mr. Heber, and purchased for 120*l.*, by the king of France.

CHAP.
II.Charles,
duke of
Orleans.

pearance of profundity, so often the bane of poetry, led them into prosaic and tedious details, and into affected refinements. *

47. Charles, duke of Orleans, long prisoner in England after the battle of Agincourt, was the first who gave polish and elegance to French poetry. In a more enlightened age, according to Goujet's opinion, he would have been among their greatest poets.† Except a little allegory in the taste of his times, he confined himself to the kind of verse called rondeaux, and to slight amatory poems, which, if they aim at little, still deserve the praise of reaching what they aim at. The easy turns of thought, and graceful simplicity of style, which these compositions require, came spontaneously to the duke of Orleans. Without as much humour as Clement Marot long afterwards displayed, he is much more of a gentleman, and would have been in any times, if not quite what Goujet supposes, a great poet, yet the pride and ornament of the court.‡

English
poetry.

48. The English language was slowly refining itself, and growing into general use. That which we sometimes call pedantry and innovation, the

* Bouterwek, p. 78.

† Goujet, Bibliothèque Française, ix. 233.

‡ The following very slight vaudeville will show the easy style of the duke of Orleans. It is curious to observe how little the manner of French poetry, in such productions, has been changed since the fifteenth century.

Petit mercier, petit panier :

Pourtant si je n'ai marchandize
Qui soit du tout à votre quise

Ne blamez pour ce mon mestier,
Je gagne denier à denier ;
C'est loin du trésor de Vénise.

Petit mercier, petit panier,
Et tandis qu'il est jour, ouvrier,
Le temps perds, quand a vous
devise,
Je vais parfaire mon emprise,
Et parmi les rues crier :
Petit mercier, petit panier.

(Recueil des anciens poètes Français, ii. 196.)

forced introduction of French words by Chaucer, though hardly more by him than by all his predecessors who translated our neighbours' poetry, and the harsh latinisms that began to appear soon afterwards, has given English a copiousness and variety which perhaps no other language possesses. But as yet there was neither thought nor knowledge sufficient to bring out its capacities. After the death of Chaucer, in 1400, a dreary blank of long duration occurs in our annals. The poetry of Hoccleve is wretchedly bad, abounding with pedantry, and destitute of all grace or spirit.*

Lydgate, the monk of Bury, nearly of the same age, prefers doubtless a higher claim to respect. An easy versifier, he served to make poetry familiar to the many, and may sometimes please the few. Gray, no light authority, speaks more favourably of Lydgate than either Warton or Ellis, or than the general complexion of his poetry would induce most readers to do.† But great poets have often the taste to discern, and the candour to acknowledge, those beauties which are latent amidst the tedious dullness of their humbler brethren. Lydgate, though probably a man of inferior powers of mind to Gower, has more of the minor qualities of a poet; his lines have sometimes more spirit, more humour, and he describes with more graphic minuteness. But his diffuseness becomes generally feeble and tedious; the attention fails in the


* Warton, ii. 348.

† Warton, ii. 361—407. Gray's works, by Mathias, ii. 55—73. These remarks on Lydgate show

what the history of English poetry would have been in the hands of Gray, as to sound and fair criticism.

CHAP.
II.James I.
of Scotland.

school-boy stories of Thebes and Troy ; and he had not the judgment to select and compress the prose narratives from which he commonly derived his subject. It seems highly probable, that Lydgate would have been a better poet in satire upon his own times, or delineation of their manners ; themes which would have gratified us much more than the fate of princes. The King's Quair, by James I. of Scotland, is a long allegory, polished and imaginative, but with some of the tediousness usual in such productions. It is uncertain whether he or a later sovereign, James V., were the author of a lively comic poem, Christ's Kirk o' the Green ; the style is so provincial, that no Englishman can draw any inference as to its antiquity. It is much more removed from our language than the King's Quair. Whatever else could be mentioned as deserving of praise is anonymous and of uncertain date. It seems to have been early in the fifteenth century that the ballad of the northern minstrels arose. But none of these that are extant could be placed with much likelihood so early as 1440.*



Restoration
of classical
learning
due to
Italy.

49. We have thus traced in outline the form of European literature, as it existed in the middle ages and in the first forty years of the fifteenth

* Chevy Chase seems to be the most ancient of those ballads that has been preserved. It may possibly have been written while Henry VI. was on the throne, though a late critic would bring it down to the reign of Henry VIII. Brydges' British Bibliography, iv. 97. The style is often fiery, like the old war songs, and much above the feeble, though natural and

touching, manner of the later ballads. One of the most remarkable circumstances about this celebrated lay is, that it relates a totally fictitious event with all historical particularity, and with real names. Hence it was probably not composed while many remembered the days of Henry IV., when the story is supposed to have occurred.

century. The result must be to convince us of our great obligations to Italy for her renewal of classical learning. What might have been the intellectual progress of Europe if she had never gone back to the fountains of Greek and Roman genius, it is impossible to determine; certainly, nothing in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries gave prospect of a very abundant harvest. It would be difficult to find any man of high reputation in modern times, who has not reaped benefit, directly or through others, from the revival of ancient learning. We have the greatest reason to doubt whether, without the Italians of these ages, it would ever have occurred. The trite metaphors of light and darkness, of dawn and twilight, are used carelessly by those who touch on the literature of the middle ages, and suggest by analogy an uninterrupted progression, in which learning, like the sun, has dissipated the shadows of barbarism. But with closer attention, it is easily seen that this is not a correct representation; that, taking Europe generally, far from being in a more advanced stage of learning at the beginning of the fifteenth century than two hundred years before, she had, in many respects, gone backwards, and gave little sign of any tendency to recover her ground. There is, in fact, no security, as far as the past history of mankind assures us, that any nation will be uniformly progressive in science, arts, and letters; nor do I perceive, whatever may be the current language, that we can expect this with much greater confidence of the whole civilised world.

50. Before we proceed to a more minute and

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II.

chronological history, let us consider for a short time some of the prevailing trains of sentiment and opinion which shaped the public mind at the close of the mediæval period.

Character
of classical
poetry lost.

51. In the early European poetry, the art sedulously cultivated by so many nations, we are struck by characteristics that distinguish it from the remains of antiquity, and belong to social changes which we should be careful to apprehend. The principles of discernment as to works of imagination and sentiment, wrought up in Greece and Rome by a fastidious and elaborate criticism, were of course effaced in the total oblivion of that literature to which they had been applied. The Latin language, no longer intelligible except to a limited class, lost that adaptation to popular sentiment, which its immature progeny had not yet attained. Hence, perhaps, or from some other cause, there ensued, as has been shown in the last chapter, a kind of palsy of the inventive faculties, so that we cannot discern for several centuries any traces of their vigorous exercise.

New
schools of
criticism on
modern
languages.

52. Five or six new languages, however, besides the ancient German, became gradually flexible and copious enough to express thought and emotion with more precision and energy; metre and rhyme gave poetry its form; a new European literature was springing up, fresh and lively, in gay raiment, by the side of that decrepit latinity, which, rather ostentatiously, wore its threadbare robes of more solemn dignity than becoming grace. But in the beginning of the fifteenth century, the revival of ancient literature among the Italians seemed

likely to change again the scene, and threatened to restore a standard of critical excellence by which the new Europe would be disadvantageously tried. It was soon felt, if not recognised in words, that what had delighted Europe for some preceding centuries depended upon sentiments fondly cherished, and opinions firmly held, but foreign, at least in the forms they presented, to the genuine spirit of antiquity. From this time we may consider as beginning to stand opposed to each other two schools of criticism, latterly called the classical and romantic ; names which should not be understood as absolutely exact, but, perhaps, rather more apposite in the period to which these pages relate than in the nineteenth century.

53. War is a very common subject of fiction ; and the warrior's character is that which poets have ever delighted to portray. But the spirit of chivalry, nourished by the laws of feudal tenure and limited monarchy, by the rules of honour, courtesy, and gallantry, by ceremonial institutions and public shows, had rather artificially modified the generous daring which always forms the basis of that character. It must be owned that the heroic ages of Greece furnished a source of fiction not unlike those of romance ; that Perseus, Theseus, or Hercules answer pretty well to knights errant, and that many stories in the poets are in the very style of Amadis or Ariosto. But these form no great part of what we call classical poetry ; though they show that the word, in its opposition to the latter style, must not be understood to comprise every thing that has descended from anti-

Effect of
chivalry on
poetry.

CHAP.
II.Effect of
gallantry
towards
women.

quity. Nothing could less resemble the peculiar tone of chivalry, than Greece in the republican times, or Rome in any times.

54. The popular taste had been also essentially affected by changes in social intercourse, rendering it more studiously and punctiliously courteous, and especially by the homage due to women under the modern laws of gallantry. Love, with the ancient poets, is often tender, sometimes virtuous, but never accompanied by a sense of deference or inferiority. This elevation of the female sex through the voluntary submission of the stronger, though a remarkable fact in the philosophical history of Europe, has not, perhaps, been adequately developed. It did not originate, or at least very partially, in the Teutonic manners, from which it has sometimes been derived. The love-songs again, and romances of Arabia, where others have sought its birth-place, display, no doubt, a good deal of that rapturous adoration which distinguishes the language of later poetry, and have, perhaps, in some measure, been the models of the Provençal troubadours; yet this seems rather consonant to the hyperbolical character of oriental works of imagination, than to a state of manners where the usual lot of women is seclusion, if not slavery. The late editor of Warton has thought it sufficient to call "that reverence and adoration of the female sex which has descended to our own times, the offspring of the Christian dispensation."* But until it can be shown that Christianity estab-

* Preface, p. 123.

lishes any such principle, we must look a little farther down for its origin.

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II.

Its probable
origin.

55. Without rejecting, by any means, the influence of these collateral and preparatory circumstances, we might ascribe more direct efficacy to the favour shown towards women in succession to lands, through inheritance or dower, by the later Roman law, and by the customs of the northern nations; to the respect which the clergy paid them (a subject which might bear to be more fully expanded); but, above all, to the gay idleness of the nobility, consuming the intervals of peace in festive enjoyments. In whatever country the charms of high-born beauty were first admitted to grace the banquet or give brilliancy to the tournament, — in whatever country the austere restraints of jealousy were most completely laid aside, — in whatever country the coarser, though often more virtuous, simplicity of unpolished ages was exchanged for winning and delicate artifices, — in whatever country, through the influence of climate or polish, less boisterousness and intemperance prevailed, — it is there that we must expect to find the commencement of so great a revolution in society.

56. Gallantry, in this sense of a general homage to the fair, a respectful deference to woman, independent of personal attachment, seems to have first become a perceptible element of European manners in the south of France, and, probably, not later than the end of the tenth century*; it was

It is not shown in old Teutonic poetry; but appears in the stories of Arthur.

* It would be absurd to assign an exact date for that which in its nature must be gradual. I have a suspicion, that sexual respect, though not with all the refinements of chivalry, might be traced

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II.

not at all in unison with the rough habits of the Carolingian Franks, or of the Anglo-Saxons. There is little or, as far as I know, nothing of it in the poem of Beowulf, or in the oldest Teutonic fragments, or in the Nibelungen Lied *; love may appear as a natural passion, but not as a conventional idolatry. It appears, on the other hand, fully developed in the sentiments as well as the usages of northern France, when we look at the tales of the court of Arthur, which Geoffry of Monmouth gave to the world about 1128. Whatever may be thought of the foundation of this famous romance, — whatever of legendary tradition he may have borrowed from Wales or Britany, the position that he was merely a faithful translator appears utterly incredible.† Besides the numerous

earlier in the south of Europe than the tenth century; but it would require a long investigation to prove this.

A passage, often quoted, of Radulphus Glaber, on the affected and effeminate manners, as he thought them, of the southern nobility who came in the train of Constance, daughter of the count of Toulouse, on her marriage with Robert, king of France, in 999, indicates that the roughness of the Teutonic character, as well perhaps as some of its virtues, had yielded to the arts and amusements of peace. It became a sort of proverb; *Franci ad bella, Provinciales ad victualia*. Eichhorn, *Allg. Gesch. i. Append. 73*. The social history of the tenth and eleventh centuries is not easily recovered. We must judge from probabilities founded on single

passages, and on the general tone of civil history. The kingdom of Arles was more tranquil than the rest of France.

* *Von eigentlicher galanterie est in dem nibelungen Lied wenig zu finden, von Christlichen mysticismus fast gar nichts*. Bouterwek, ix. 147. I may observe that the positions in the text, as to the absence of gallantry in the old Teutonic poetry, are borne out by every other authority; by Weber, Price, Turner, and Eichhorn. The last writer draws rather an amusing inference as to the want of politeness towards the fair sex from the frequency of abductions in Teutonic and Scandinavian story, which he enumerates. *Allg. Gesch. i. 37. Append. p. 37*.

† See, in Mr. Turner's *Hist. of England*, iv. 256—269., two dissertations on the romantic his-

allusions to Henry I. of England, and to the history of his times, which Mr. Turner and others have indicated, the chivalrous gallantry, with which alone we are now concerned, is not characteristic of so rude a people as the Welsh or Armoricans. Geoffrey is almost our earliest testimony to these manners; and this gives the chief value to his fables. The crusades were probably the great means of inspiring an uniformity of conventional courtesy into the European aristocracy, which still constitutes the common character of gentlemen; but it may have been gradually wearing away their national peculiarities for some time before.

57. The condition and the opinions of a people stamp a character on its literature; while that literature powerfully reacts upon and moulds afresh the national temper from which it has taken its distinctive type. This is remarkably applicable to the romances of chivalry. Some have even believed, that chivalry itself, in the fulness of proportion ascribed to it by these works, had never existence beyond their pages; others, with more probability, that it was heightened and preserved by their influence upon a state of society which had given them birth. A considerable difference is perceived between the metrical romances, contemporaneous with or shortly subsequent to the crusades, and those in prose after the middle of the fourteenth century. The former are more

Romances
of chivalry,
of two
kinds.

stories of Turpin and of Geoffrey, each was written, seem irrefragably wherein the relation between the demonstrated. two, and the motives with which

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fierce, more warlike, more full of abhorrence of infidels; they display less of punctilious courtesy, less of submissive deference to woman, less of absorbing and passionate love, less of voluptuousness and luxury; their superstition has more of interior belief, and less of ornamental machinery, than those to which Amadis de Gaul and other heroes of the later cycles of romance furnished a model. The one reflect, in a tolerably faithful mirror, the rough customs of the feudal aristocracy in their original freedom, but partially modified by the gallant and courteous bearing of France; the others represent to us, with more of licensed deviation from reality, the softened features of society, in the decline of the feudal system through the cessation of intestine war, the increase of wealth and luxury, and the silent growth of female ascendancy. This last again was, no doubt, promoted by the tone given to manners through romance; the language of respect became that of gallantry; the sympathy of mankind was directed towards the success of love; and, perhaps, it was thought, that the sacrifices which this laxity of moral opinion cost the less prudent of the fair, were but the price of the homage that the whole sex obtained.

Effect of
difference
of religion
upon
poetry.

58. Nothing, however, more showed a contrast between the old and the new trains of sentiment in points of taste than the difference of religion. It would be untrue to say, that ancient poetry is entirely wanting in exalted notions of the Deity; but they are rare in comparison with those which the Christian religion has inspired into very inferior

minds, and which, with more or less purity, pervaded the vernacular poetry of Europe. They were obscured in both by an enormous superstructure of mythological machinery; but so different in names and associations, though not always in spirit, or even in circumstances, that those who delighted in the fables of Ovid usually scorned the Golden Legend of James de Voragine, whose pages were turned over with equal pleasure by a credulous multitude, little able to understand why any one should relish heathen stories which he did not believe. The modern mythology, if we may include in it the saints and devils, as well as the fairy and goblin armies, which had been retained in service since the days of paganism, is so much more copious, and so much more easily adapted to our ordinary associations than the ancient, that this has given an advantage to the romantic school in their contention, which they have well known how to employ and to abuse.

59. Upon these three columns,—chivalry, gallantry, and religion,—repose the fictions of the middle ages, especially those usually designated as romances. These, such as we now know them, and such as display the characteristics above mentioned, were originally metrical, and chiefly written by natives of the north of France. The English and Germans translated or imitated them. A new æra of romance began with the Amadis de Gaul, derived, as some have thought, but upon insufficient evidence, from a French metrical original, but certainly written in Portugal, though in the Castilian language, by Vasco de Lobeyra,

General
tone of
romance.

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whose death is generally fixed in 1325.* This romance is in prose; and though a long interval seems to have elapsed before those founded on the story of Amadis began to multiply, many were written in French during the latter part of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, derived from other legends of chivalry, which became the popular reading, and superseded the old metrical romances, already somewhat obsolete in their forms of language.†

Popular
moral
fictions.

60. As the taste of a chivalrous aristocracy was naturally delighted with romances, that not only led the imagination through a series of adventures, but presented a mirror of sentiments to which they themselves pretended, so that of mankind in general found its gratification, sometimes in tales of home growth, or transplanted from the east, whether serious or amusing, such as the *Gesta Romanorum*, the *Dolopathos*, the *Decameron*, (certainly the most celebrated and best written of these inventions,) the *Pecorone*; sometimes in historical ballads, or in moral fables, a favourite style of composition, especially with the Teutonic nations; sometimes, again, in legends of saints, and the popular demonology of the age. The experience and sagacity, the moral sentiments, the invention and fancy of many obscure centuries may be discerned more fully and favourably in these various fictions than in their elaborate treatises. No one

* Bouterwek, *Hist. of Spanish Literature*, p. 48.

† The oldest prose romance, which also is partly metrical, appears to be *Tristan of Leonois*,

one of the cycle of the round table, written or translated by Lucas de Gast, about 1170. Roquefort, *Etat de la Poésie Française*, p. 147.

of the European nations stands so high in this respect as the German; their ancient tales have a raciness and truth which has been only imitated by others. Among the most renowned of these we must place the story of Reynard the Fox; the origin of which, long sought by literary critics, recedes, as they prolong the inquiry, into greater depths of antiquity. It was supposed to be written, or at least first published, in German rhyme, by Henry of Alkmaar, in 1498; but earlier editions, in the Flemish language, have since been discovered. It has been found written in French verse by Jaquemars Gielée, of Lille, near the end, and in French prose by Peter of St. Cloud, near the beginning, of the thirteenth century. Finally, the principal characters are mentioned in a Provençal song by Richard Cœur de Lion.* But though we thus bring the story to France, where it became so popular as to change the very name of the principal animal, which was always called goupil (vulpes) till the fourteenth century, when it assumed, from the hero of the tale, the name of Renard†, there seems every reason to believe that it is of German origin; and, according to probable conjecture, a certain Reinard of Lorraine, famous for his vulpine qualities in the ninth cen-

* *Recueil des anciens poètes*, i. 21. M. Raynouard observes that the Troubadours, and, first of all, Richard Cœur de Lion, have quoted the story of Renard, sometimes with allusions not referrible to the present romance. *Journal des Sav.* 1826, p. 340. A great deal has been written about

this story; but I shall only quote Bouterwek, ix. 347.; Heinsius, iv. 104., and the *Biographie Universelle*; arts. Gielée. Alkmaar.

† Something like this nearly happened in England: bears have had a narrow escape of being called only bruins, from their representative in the fable.

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II.

Exclusion
of politics
from liter-
ature.

tury, suggested the name to some unknown fabulist of the empire.

61. These moral fictions, as well as more serious productions, in what may be called the ethical literature of the middle ages, towards which Germany contributed a large share, speak freely of the vices of the great. But they deal with them as men responsible to God, and subject to natural law, rather than as members of a community. Of political opinions, properly so called, which have in later times so powerfully swayed the conduct of mankind, we find very little to say in the fifteenth century. In so far as they were not merely founded on temporary circumstances, or at most on the prejudices connected with positive institutions in each country, the predominant associations that influenced the judgment were derived from respect for birth, of which opulence was as yet rather the sign than the substitute. This had long been, and long continued to be, the characteristic prejudice of European society. It was hardly ever higher than in the fifteenth century; when heraldry, the language that speaks to the eye of pride, and the science of those who despise every other, was cultivated with all its ingenious pedantry; and every improvement in useful art, every creation in inventive architecture, was made subservient to the grandeur of an elevated class in society. The burghers, in those parts of Europe which had become rich by commerce, emulated in their public distinctions, as they did ultimately in their private families, the ensigns of patrician nobility. This prevailing spirit of aristocracy was

still but partially modified by the spirit of popular freedom on one hand, or of respectful loyalty on the other.

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II.

Religious
opinions.

Attacks on
the church.

62. It is far more important to observe the disposition of the public mind in respect of religion, which not only claims to itself one great branch of literature, but exerts a powerful influence over almost every other. The greater part of literature in the middle ages, at least from the twelfth century, may be considered as artillery levelled against the clergy: I do not say against the church, which might imply a doctrinal opposition by no means universal. But if there is one theme upon which the most serious as well as the lightest, the most orthodox as the most heretical writers are united, it is ecclesiastical corruption. Divided among themselves, the secular clergy detested the regular; the regular monks satirised the mendicant friars; who, in their turn, after exposing both to the ill-will of the people, incurred a double portion of it themselves. In this most important respect, therefore, the influence of mediæval literature was powerful towards change. But it rather loosened the associations of ancient prejudice, and prepared mankind for revolutions of speculative opinion, than brought them forward.

63. It may be said in general, that three distinct currents of religious opinion are discernible, on this side of the Alps, in the first part of the fifteenth century. 1. The high pretensions of the Church of Rome to a sort of moral, as well as theological, infallibility, and to a paramount authority even in temporal affairs, when she should think

Three lines
of religious
opinion in
fifteenth
century.

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II.

fit to interfere with them, were maintained by a great body in the monastic and mendicant orders, and had still, probably, a considerable influence over the people in most parts of Europe. 2. The councils of Constance and Basle, and the contentions of the Gallican and German churches against the encroachments of the holy see, had raised up a strong adverse party, supported occasionally by the government, and more uniformly by the temporal lawyers and other educated laymen. It derived, however, its greatest force from a number of sincere and earnest persons, who set themselves against the gross vices of the time, and the abuses grown up in the church through self-interest or connivance. They were disgusted, also, at the scholastic systems, which had turned religion into a matter of subtle dispute, while they laboured to found it on devotional feeling and contemplative love. The mystical theology, which, from seeking the illuminating influence and piercing love of the Deity, often proceeded onward to visions of complete absorption in his essence, till that itself was lost, as in the east, from which this system sprung, in an annihilating pantheism, had never wanted, and can never want, its disciples. Some, of whom Bonaventura is the most conspicuous, opposed its enthusiastic emotions to the icy subtleties of the schoolmen. Some appealed to the hearts of the people in their own language. Such was Tauler, whose sermons were long popular and have often been printed; and another was the unknown author of *The German Theology*, a favourite work with Luther, and known by the Latin version of

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II.Treatise de
Imitatione
Christi.

Sebastian Castalio. Such, too, were Gerson and Clemangis, and such were the numerous brethren who issued from the college of Deventer.* One, doubtless of this class, whenever he may have lived, was author of the celebrated treatise *De Imitatione Christi* (a title which has been transferred from the first chapter to the entire work), commonly ascribed to Thomas von Kempen or à Kempis, one of the Deventer society, but the origin of which has been, and will continue to be, the subject of strenuous controversy. Besides Thomas à Kempis, two candidates have been supported by their respective partisans; John Gerson, the famous chancellor of the university of Paris, and John Gersen, whose name appears in one manuscript, and whom some contend to have been abbot of a monastery at Vercelli in the thirteenth century, while others hold him an imaginary being, except as a misnomer of Gerson. Several French writers plead for their illustrious countrymen, and especially M. Gence, one of the last who has revived the controversy; while the German and Flemish writers, to whom the Sorbonne acceded, have always contended for Thomas à Kempis, and Gersen has had the respectable support of Belarmin, Mabillon, and most of the Benedictine order.† The book itself is said to have gone

* Eichhorn, vi. 1—136., has amply and well treated the theological literature of the fifteenth century. Mosheim is less satisfactory, and Milner wants extent of learning; yet both will be useful to the English reader. Eichhorn seems well

acquainted with the mystical divines, in p. 97. et post.

† I am not prepared to state the external evidence upon this keenly debated question with sufficient precision. In a few words, it may, I believe, be said, that in favour of

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through 1800 editions, and has probably been more read than any one work after the Scriptures. 3.

Thomas à Kempis has been alleged the testimony of many early editions bearing his name, including one about 1471, which appears to be the first, as well as a general tradition from his own time, extending over most of Europe, which has led a great majority, including the Sorbonne itself, to determine the cause in his favour. It is also said that a manuscript of the treatise *De Imitatione* bears these words at the conclusion: *Finitus et completus per manum Thomæ de Kempis, 1441*; and that in this manuscript are so many erasures and alterations, as give it the appearance of his original autograph. Against Thomas à Kempis it is urged, that he was a professed calligrapher or copyist for the college of Deventer; that the chronicle of St. Agnes, a contemporary work, says of him: *Scripsit Bibliam nostram totaliter, et multos alios libros pro domo et pro pretio*; that the entry above mentioned is more like that of a transcriber than of an author; that the same chronicle makes no mention of his having written the treatise *De Imitatione*, nor does it appear in an early list of works ascribed to him. For Gerson are brought forward a great number of early editions in France, and still more in Italy, among which is the first that bears a date (Venice, 1483), both in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and some other probabilities are alleged. But this treatise is not mentioned in a list of his writings given by himself. As to Gerson, his claim seems to rest on a manuscript of great antiquity, which ascribes it to him, and indirectly on all those manuscripts which are

asserted to be older than the time of Gerson and Thomas à Kempis. But, as I have before observed, I do not profess to give a full view of the external evidence, of which I possess but a superficial knowledge.

From the book itself, two remarks, which I do not pretend to be novel, have suggested themselves. 1. The Gallicisms or Italicisms are very numerous, and strike the reader at once; such as, *Scientia sine timore Dei quid importat?—Resiste in principio inclinationi tuæ—Vigilia serotina—Homo passionatus—Vivere cum nobis contrariantibus—Timoratio in cunctis actibus—Sufferentia crucis*. It seems strange that these barbarous adaptations of French or Italian should have occurred to any one, whose native language was Dutch; unless it can be shown, that through St. Bernard, or any other ascetic writer, they had become naturalised in religious style. 2. But, on the other hand, it seems impossible to resist the conviction, that the author was an inhabitant of a monastery, which was not the case with Gerson, originally a secular priest at Paris, and employed for many years in active life, as chancellor of the university, and one of the leaders of the Gallican church. The whole spirit breathed by the treatise *De imitatione Christi* is that of a solitary ascetic:—*Vellem pluries tacuisse et inter homines non fuisse—Sed quare tam libenter loquimur, et invicem fabulamur, cum raro sine læsione conscientie ad silentium redimus.—Cella continuata dulcescit, et male custodita tedium generat. Si in principio conversionis tuæ bene eam incolueris et custodieris, erit*

A third religious party consisted of the avowed or concealed heretics, some disciples of the older sectaries, some of Wicliffe or Huss, resembling the school of Gerson and Gerard Groot in their earnest piety, but drawing a more decided line of separation between themselves and the ruling power, and ripe for a more complete reformation than the others were inclined to desire. It is not possible, however, for us to pronounce on all the shades of opinion that might be secretly cherished in the fifteenth century.

64. Those of the second class were, perhaps, comparatively rare at this time in Italy, and those of the third much more so. But the extreme superstition of the popular creed, the conversation of Jews and Mahometans, the unbounded admiration of pagan genius and virtue, the natural tend-

Scepticism.
Defences
of Christianity.

tibi posthac dilecta, amica, et gratissimum solatium.

As the former consideration seems to exclude Thomas à Kempis, so the latter is unfavourable to the claims of Gerson. It has been observed, however, that in one passage, l. i. c. 24., there is an apparent allusion to Dante; which, if intended, must put an end to Gersen, abbot of Vercelli, whom his supporters place in the first part of the thirteenth century. But the allusion is not indisputable. Various articles in the *Biographie Universelle*, from the pen of M. Gence, maintain his favourite hypothesis; and M. Daunou, in the *Journal des Savans* for 1826, and again in the volume for 1827, seems to incline the same way. This is in the review of a defence of the pretensions of Gersen, by

M. Gregory, who adduces some strong reasons to prove that the work is older than the fourteenth century.

The book contains great beauty and heart-piercing truth in many of its detached sentences, but places its rule of life in absolute seclusion from the world, and seldom refers to the exercise of any social, or even domestic duty. It has naturally been less a favourite in Protestant countries, both from its monastic character, and because those who incline towards Calvinism do not find in it the phraseology to which they are accustomed. The translations are very numerous, but there seems to be an inimitable expression in its concise and energetic, though barbarous Latin.

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ency of many minds to doubt and to perceive difficulties, which the schoolmen were apt to find every where, and no where to solve, joined to the irreligious spirit of the Aristotelian philosophy, especially as modified by Averroes, could not but engender a secret tendency towards infidelity, the course of which may be traced with ease in the writings of those ages. Thus the tale of the three rings in Bocacce, whether original or not, may be reckoned among the sports of a sceptical philosophy. But a proof, not less decisive, that the blind faith we ascribe to the middle ages was by no means universal, results from the numerous vindications of Christianity written in the fifteenth century. Eichhorn, after referring to several passages in the works of Petrarch, mentions defences of religion by Marsilius Ficinus, Alfonso de Spina, a converted Jew, Savanarola, Æneas Sylvius, Picus of Mirandola. He gives an analysis of the first, which, in its course of argument, differs little from modern apologies of the same class.*

Raimond
de Sebonde.

65. These writings, though by men so considerable as most of those he has named, are very obscure at present; but the treatise of Raimond de Sebonde is somewhat better known, in consequence of the chapter in Montaigne entitled an apology for him. Montaigne had previously translated into French the *Theologia Naturalis* of this Sebonde, professor of medicine at Barcelona in the early part of the fifteenth century. This has been called by some the first regular system of natural theology; but, even if nothing of that kind could

* Vol. vi. p. 24.

be found in the writings of the schoolmen, which is certainly not the case, such an appellation, notwithstanding the title, seems hardly due to Sebonde's book, which is intended, not so much to erect a fabric of religion independent of revelation, as to demonstrate the latter by proofs derived from the order of nature.

66. Dugald Stewart, in his first dissertation prefixed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, observes, that "the principal aim of Sebonde's book, according to Montaigne, is to show that Christians are in the wrong to make human reasoning the basis of their belief, since the object of it is only conceived by faith, and by a special inspiration of the divine grace." I have been able to ascertain that the excellent author was not misled in this passage by any carelessness of his own, but by confiding in Cotton's translation of Montaigne, which absolutely perverts the sense. Far from such being the aim of Sebonde, his book is wholly devoted to the rational proofs of religion: and what Stewart, on Cotton's authority, has taken for a proposition of Sebonde himself, is merely an objection which, according to Montaigne, some were apt to make against his mode of reasoning. The passage is so very clear, that every one who looks at Montaigne (l. ii. c. 12.) must instantaneously perceive the oversight which the translator has made; or he may satisfy himself by the article on Sebonde in Bayle.

His views
misunder-
stood.

67. The object of Sebonde's book, according to himself, is to develop those truths as to God and man, which are latent in nature, and through

His real
object.

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which the latter may learn every thing necessary ; and especially may understand Scripture, and have an infallible certainty of its truth. This science is incorporate in all the books of the doctors of the church, as the alphabet is in their words. It is the first science, the basis of all others, and requiring no other to be previously known. The scarcity of the book will justify an extract ; which, though in very uncouth Latin, will serve to give a notion of what Sebonde really aimed at ; but he labours with a confused expression, arising, partly, from the vastness of his subject.*

* Duo sunt libri nobis dati a Deo: scilicet liber universitatis creaturarum, sive liber naturæ, et alius est liber sacræ scripturæ. Primus liber fuit datus homini a principio, dum universitas rerum fuit condita, quoniam quælibet creatura non est nisi quædam litera digito Dei scripta, et ex pluribus creaturis sicut ex pluribus literis componitur liber. Ita componitur liber creaturarum, in quo libro etiam continetur homo ; et est principalior litera ipsius libri. Et sicut literæ et dictiones factæ ex literis important et includunt scientiam et diversas significationes et mirabiles sententias : ita conformiter ipsæ creaturæ simul conjunctæ et ad invicem comparatæ important et significant diversas significationes et sententias, et continent scientiam homini necessariam. Secundus autem liber scripturæ datus est homini secundo, et hoc in defectu primi libri ; eo quia homo nesciebat in primo legere, quia erat cæcus ; sed tamen primus liber creaturarum est omnibus communis, quia solum clerici legere sciunt in eo [i. e. secundo].

Item primus liber, scilicet naturæ, non potest falsificari, nec de-

leri, neque false interpretari ; ideo hæretici non possunt eum false intelligere, nec aliquis potest in eo fieri hæreticus. Sed secundus potest falsificari et false interpretari et male intelligi. Attamen uterque liber est ab eodem, quia idem Dominus et creaturas condidit, et sacram Scripturam revelavit. Et ideo conveniunt ad invicem, et non contradicit unus alteri, sed tamen primus est nobis connaturalis, secundus supernaturalis. Præterea cum homo sit naturaliter rationalis, et susceptibilis disciplinæ et doctrinæ ; et cum naturaliter a sua creatione nullam habeat actu doctrinam neque scientiam, sit tamen aptus ad suscipiendum eam ; et cum doctrina et scientia sine libro, in quo scripta sit, non possit haberi, convenientissimum fuit, ne frustra homo esset capax doctrinæ et scientiæ, quod divina scientia homini librum creaverit, in quo per se et sine magistro possit studere doctrinam necessariam ; propterea hoc totum istum mundum visibilem sibi creavit, et dedit tanquam librum proprium et naturalem et infallibilem, Dei digito scriptum, ubi singulæ creaturæ quasi literæ sunt, non humano

68. Sebonde seems to have had floating in his mind, as this extract will suggest, some of those theories as to the correspondence of the moral and material world, which were afterwards propounded, in their cloudy magnificence, by the Theosophists of the next two centuries. He afterwards undertakes to prove the Trinity from the analogy of nature. His argument is ingenious enough, if not quite of orthodox tendency, being drawn from the scale of existence, which must lead us to a being immediately derived from the First Cause. He proceeds to derive other doctrines of Christianity from principles of natural reason; and after this, which occupies about half a volume of 779 closely printed pages, he comes to direct proofs of revelation: first, because God, who does all for his own honour, would not suffer an impostor to persuade the world that he was equal to God, which Mahomet never pretended; and afterwards by other arguments more or less valid or ingenious.

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II.

Nature of
his argu-
ments.

69. We shall now adopt a closer and more chronological arrangement than before, ranging under

arbitrio sed divino juvante iudicio ad demonstrandum homini sapientiam et doctrinam sibi necessariam ad salutem. Quam quidem sapientiam nullus potest videre, neque legere per se in dicto libro semper aperto, nisi fuerit a Deo illuminatus et a peccato originali mundatus. Et ideo nullus antiquorum philosophorum paganorum potest legere hanc scientiam, quia erant excæcati quantum ad propriam salutem, quamvis in dicto libro legerunt aliquam scientiam, et omne quam habuerunt ab eodem

contraxerunt; sed veram sapientiam quæ ducit ad vitam æternam, quamvis fuerat in eo scripta, legere non potuerunt.

Ista autem scientia non est aliud nisi cogitare et videre sapientiam scriptam in creaturis, et extrahere ipsam ab illis, et ponere in animâ, et videre significationem creaturarum. Et sic comparando ad aliam et conjungere sicut dictionem dictioni, et ex tali conjunctione resultat sententia et significatio vera, dum tamen sciat homo intelligere et cognoscere.

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each decennial period the circumstances of most importance in the general history of literature, as well as the principal books published within it. This course we shall pursue till the channels of learning become so various, and so extensively diffused through several kingdoms, that it will be found convenient to deviate in some measure from so strictly chronological a form, in order to consolidate better the history of different sciences, and diminish, in some measure, what can never wholly be removed from a work of this nature, — the confusion of perpetual change of subject.

CHAP. III.

ON THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE FROM 1440 TO
THE CLOSE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

SECT. I. 1440—1450.

Classical Literature in Italy — Nicolas V. — Laurentius Valla.

1. **T**HE reader is not to consider the year 1440 as a marked epoch in the annals of literature. It has sometimes been treated as such, by those who have referred the invention of printing to this particular epoch. But it is here chosen as an arbitrary line, nearly coincident with the complete development of an ardent thirst for classical, and especially Grecian, literature in Italy, as the year 1400 was with its first manifestation.

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III.

The year
1440 not
chosen as
an epoch.

2. No very conspicuous events belong to this decennial period. The spirit of improvement, already so powerfully excited in Italy, continued to produce the same effects in rescuing ancient manuscripts from the chances of destruction, accumulating them in libraries, making translations from the Greek, and by intense labour in the perusal of the best authors, rendering both their substance and their language familiar to the Italian scholar. The patronage of Cosmo de' Medici, Alfonso king of Naples, and Nicolas of Este, has already

Continual
progress of
learning.

CHAP. been mentioned. Lionel, successor of the last
 III. prince, was by no means inferior to him in love of
 Nicolas V. letters. But they had no patron so important as
 Nicolas V. (Thomas of Sarzana), who became
 Pope in 1447; nor has any later occupant of
 that chair, without excepting Leo X., deserved
 equal praise as an encourager of learning. Nicolas
 founded the Vatican library, and left, it at his
 death in 1455, enriched with 5000 volumes; a
 treasure far exceeding that of any other collection
 in Europe. Every scholar who needed main-
 tenance, which was of course the common case,
 found it at the court of Rome; innumerable bene-
 fices, all over Christendom, which had fallen into
 the grasp of the holy see, and frequently re-
 quired of their incumbents, as is well known,
 neither residence, nor even the priestly character,
 affording the means of generosity, which have sel-
 dom been so laudably applied. Several Greek
 authors were translated into Latin by direction
 of Nicolas V., among which are the history of
 Diodorus Siculus, and Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, by
 Poggio*, who still enjoyed the office of apostolical
 secretary, as he had under Eugenius IV., and

* This translation of Diodorus has been ascribed by some of our writers, even since the error has been pointed out, to John Free, an Englishman, who had heard the lectures of the younger Guarini in Italy. Quod opus, Leland observes, Itali Poggio vanissime attribuant Florentino. De Scriptor. Britann. p. 462. But it bears the name of Poggio in the two editions, printed in 1472 and 1493; and Leland seems to have been deceived

by some one who had put Free's name on a manuscript of the translation. Poggio, indeed, in his preface, declares that he undertook it by command of Nicolas V. See Niceron, ix. 158.; Zeno, *Dissertationi Vossiane*, i. 41.; Ginguéné, iii. 245. Pits follows Leland in ascribing a translation of Diodorus to Free, and quotes the first words: thus, if it still should be suggested that this may be a different work, there are the means of proving it.

with still more abundant munificence on the part of the pope; Herodotus and Thucydides by Valla, Polybius by Perotti, Appian by Decembrio, Strabo by Gregory of Tiferno and Guarino of Verona, Theophrastus by Gaza, Plato de Legibus, Ptolemy's *Almagest*, and the *Præparatio Evangelica* of Eusebius, by George of Trebizond.* These translations, it has been already observed, will not bear a very severe criticism, but certainly there was an extraordinary cluster of learning round the chair of this excellent pope.

3. Corniani remarks, that if Nicolas V., like some popes, had raised a distinguished family, many pens would have been employed to immortalise him; but not having surrounded himself with relations, his fame has been much below his merits. Gibbon, one of the first to do full justice to Nicolas, has made a similar observation. How striking the contrast between this Pope and his famous predecessor Gregory I., who, if he did not burn and destroy heathen authors, was at least anxious to discourage the reading of them! These eminent men, like Michael Angelo's figures of Night and Morning, seem to stand at the two gates of the middle ages, emblems and heralds of the mind's long sleep, and of its awakening.

Justice due
to his cha-
racter.

4. Several little treatises by Poggio, rather in a moral than political strain, display an observing and intelligent mind. Such are those on nobility, and on the unhappiness of princes. For these, which were written before 1440, the reader may

Poggio on
the ruins of
Rome.

* Heeren, p. 72.

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III.

have recourse to Shepherd, Corniani, or Ginguéné. A later essay, if we may so call it, on the vicissitudes of fortune, begins with rather an interesting description of the ruins of Rome. It is an enumeration of the more conspicuous remains of the ancient city; and we may infer from it that no great devastation or injury has taken place since the fifteenth century. Gibbon has given an account of this little tract, which is not, as he shows, the earliest description of the ruins of Rome. Poggio, I will add, seems not to have known some things with which we are familiar; as the Cloaca Maxima, the fragments of the Servian wall, the Mamertine prison, the Temple of Nerva, the Giano Quadrifonte; and, by some odd misinformation, believes that the tomb of Cecilia Metella, which he had seen entire, was afterwards destroyed.* This leads to a conjecture that the treatise was not finished during his residence at Rome, and consequently not within the present decennium.

Account of
the East, by
Conti.

5. In the fourth book of this treatise *De Varietate Fortunæ*, Poggio has introduced a remarkable narration of travels by a Venetian, Nicolo di Conti, who, in 1419, had set off from his country, and after passing many years in Persia and India, returned home in 1444. His account of those regions, in some respects the earliest on which reliance could be placed, will be found, rendered into Italian from a Portuguese version of Poggio, in the first volume of Ramusio. That editor seems not to have known that the original was in print.

* Ad calcem postea majore ex parte exterminatum.

6. A far more considerable work by Laurentius Valla, on the graces of the Latin language, is rightly, I believe, placed within this period ; but it is often difficult to determine the dates of books published before the invention of printing. Valla, like Poggio, had long earned the favour of Alfonso, but, unlike him, had forfeited that of the court of Rome. His character was very irascible and overbearing ; a fault too general with the learned of the fifteenth century ; but he may, perhaps, be placed at the head of the literary republic at this time ; for if inferior to Poggio, as probably he was, in vivacity and variety of genius, he was undoubtedly above him in what was then most valued and most useful, grammatical erudition.

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III.

Laurentius
Valla.

7. Valla began with an attack on the court of Rome in his declamation against the donation of Constantine. Some have in consequence reckoned him among the precursors of Protestantism ; while others have imputed to the Roman see, that he was pursued with its hostility for questioning that pretended title to sovereignty. But neither of these representations is just. Valla confines himself altogether to the temporal principality of the pope ; but in this his language must be admitted to have been so abusive, as to render the resentment of the court of Rome not unreasonable.*

His attack
on the
court of
Rome.

* A few lines will suffice as a specimen. O Romani pontifices, exemplum facinorum omnium cæteris pontificibus, et improbissimi scribæ et pharisæi, qui sedetis super cathedram Moysi, et opera Dathan et Abyron facitis, itane vestimenta apparatus, pompa equitatus, omnis denique vita Cæsaris, vicarium Christi decebit ? The whole tone is more like Luther's violence, than what we should expect from an Italian of the fifteenth century. But it is with the am-

CHAP.
III.

His treatise
on the
Latin lan-
guage.

8. The more famous work of Valla, *De Elegantiss Latinæ Linguæ*, begins with too arrogant an assumption. "These books," he says, "will contain nothing that has been said by any one else. For many ages past, not only no man has been able to speak Latin, but none have understood the Latin they read: the studious of philosophy have had no comprehension of the philosophers,—the advocates of the orators, — the lawyers of the jurists, — the general scholar of any writers of antiquity." Valla, however, did at least incomparably more than any one who had preceded him; and it would probably appear, that a great part of the distinctions in Latin syntax, inflexion, and synonymy, which our best grammars contain, may be traced to his work. It is to be observed, that he made free use of the ancient grammarians, so that his vaunt of originality must be referred to later times. Valla is very copious as to synonyms, on which the delicate, and even necessary understanding of a language mainly depends. If those have done most for any science who have carried it farthest from the point whence they set out, philology seems to owe quite as much to Valla as to

bitious spirit of aggrandisement as temporal princes, that he reproaches the pontiffs; nor can it be denied, that Martin and Eugenius had given provocation for his invective. *Nec amplius horrenda vox audiatur, partes contra ecclesiam; ecclesia contra Perusinos pugnat, contra Bononienses. Non contra Christianos pugnat ecclesia, sed papa.* Of the papal claim to temporal sovereignty by prescrip-

tion, Valla writes indignantly. *Præscripsit Romana ecclesia; o imperiti, o divini juris ignari. Nul- lus quantumvis annorum numerus verum abolere titulum potest. Præscripsit Romana ecclesia. Tace, nefaria lingua. Præscriptionem quæ fit de rebus mutis atque irrationalibus, ad hominem transfers; cujus quo diuturnior in servitute possessio, eo detestabilior.*

any one who has come since. The treatise was received with enthusiastic admiration, continually reprinted, honoured with a paraphrase by Erasmus, commented, abridged, extracted, and even turned into verse.*

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9. Valla, however, self-confident and of no good temper, in censuring the language of others, fell not unfrequently into mistakes of his own. Vives and Budæus, coming in the next century, and in a riper age of philology, blame the hypercritical disposition of one who had not the means of pronouncing negatively on Latin words and phrases, from his want of sufficient dictionaries; his fastidiousness became what they call superstition, imposing captious scruples and unnecessary observances on himself and the world.† And of this species of superstition there has been much since his time in philology. Its defects.

10. Heeren, one of the few who have, in modern times, spoken of this work from personal knowledge, and with sufficient learning, gives it a Heeren's praise of it.

* Corniani, ii. 221. The editions of Valla de *Elegantis*, recorded by Panzer, are twenty-eight in the fifteenth century, beginning in 1471, and thirty-one in the first thirty-six years of the next.

† Vives de tradendis disciplinis, i. 478. Budæus observes: Ego Laurentium Vallensem, egregii spiritus virum, existimo sæculi sui imperitia offensum primum Latine loquendi consuetudinem constituere summa religione instituisse; deinde judicii cerimonia singulari, cum profectus quoque diligentiam æquasset, in eam superstitionem sensim delapsum esse, ut et sese ipse et alios captiosis observatio-

nibus scribendique legibus obligaret. Commentar. in ling. Græc. p. 26. (1529.) But sometimes, perhaps, Valla is right, and Budæus wrong in censuring him; as, where he disputes the former's rule, that two epithets, not being placed as predicates, cannot be joined in Latin prose to a substantive without a copula, on no better grounds than such an usage of the pronoun *suus*, or a phrase like *privata res maritima* in Cicero, where *res maritima* is in the nature of a single word, like *res publica*. The rule is certainly a good one, even if a few better exceptions can be found.

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high character. "Valla was without doubt the best acquainted with Latin of any man in his age; yet, no pedantic Ciceronian, he had studied in all the classical writers of Rome. His *Elegantiae* are a work on grammar; they contain an explanation of refined turns of expression; especially where they are peculiar to Latin. They display not only an exact knowledge of that tongue, but often also a really philosophical study of language in general. In an age when nothing was so much valued as a good Latin style, yet when the helps, of which we now possess so many, were all wanting, such a work must obtain a great success, since it relieved a necessity which every one felt."*

Valla's
annotations
on the New
Testament.

11. We have to give this conspicuous scholar a place in another line of criticism, that on the text and interpretation of the New Testament. His annotations are the earliest specimen of explanations founded on the original language. In the course of these, he treats the Vulgate with some severity. But Valla is said to have had but a slight knowledge of Greek †; and it must also be owned, that with all his merit as a Latin critic, he wrote indifferently, and with less classical spirit than his adversary Poggio. The invectives of these against

* P. 220.

† Annis abhinc ducentis Herodotum et Thucydidem Latinis literis exponebat Laurentius Valla, in ea bene et eleganter dicendi copia, quam totis voluminibus explicavit, inelegans tamen, et pæne barbarus, Græcis ad hoc literis leviter tinctus, ad auctorum sententias parum attentus, oscitans

sæpe, et alias res agens, fidem apud eruditos decoxit. Huet de claris interpretibus, apud Blount. Daunou, however, in the *Biographie Universelle*, art. Thucydides, asserts that Valla's translation of that historian is generally faithful. This would show no inconsiderable knowledge of Greek for that age.

each other do little honour to their memory, and are not worth recording in this volume, though they could not be omitted in a legitimate history of the Italian scholars.

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III.

SECT. II. 1450—1460.

Greeks in Italy — Invention of Printing.

12. THE capture of Constantinople in 1453 drove a few learned Greeks, who had lingered to the last amidst the crash of their ruined empire, to the hospitable and admiring Italy. Among these have been reckoned Argyropulus and Chalcondyles, successively teachers of their own language, Andronicus Callistus, who is said to have followed the same profession both there and at Rome, and Constantine Lascaris, of an imperial family, whose lessons were given for several years at Milan, and afterwards at Messina. It seems, however, to be proved that Argyropulus had been already for several years in Italy.*

Fresh arrival of Greeks in Italy.

13. The cultivation of Greek literature gave rise about this time to a vehement controversy, which had some influence on philosophical opinions in Italy. Gemistus Pletho, a native of the Morea, and one of those who attended the council of Florence in 1439, being an enthusiastic votary of the Platonic theories in metaphysics and natural theology, communicated to Cosmo de' Medici part

Platonists and Aristotelians.

* Hody, Tiraboschi, Roscoe.

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of his own zeal; and from that time the citizen of Florence formed a scheme of establishing an academy of learned men, to discuss and propagate the Platonic system. This seems to have been carried into effect early in the present decennial period.

Their controversy.

14. Meantime, a treatise by Pletho, wherein he not only extolled the Platonic philosophy, which he mingled, as was then usual, with that of the Alexandrian school, and of the spurious writings attributed to Zoroaster and Hermes, but inveighed without measure against Aristotle and his disciples, had aroused the Aristotelians of Greece, where, as in western Europe, their master's authority had long prevailed. It seems not improbable, that the Platonists were obnoxious to the orthodox party for sacrificing their own church to that of Rome; and there is also strong ground for ascribing a rejection of Christianity to Pletho. The dispute, at least, began in Greece, where Pletho's treatise met with an angry opponent in Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople.* It soon spread to Italy; Theodore Gaza embracing the cause of Aristotle with temper and moderation†, and George of Tre-

* Pletho's death, in an extreme old age, is fixed by Brucker, on the authority of George of Trebizond, before the capture of Constantinople. A letter, indeed, of Bessarion in 1462, (*Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscript.* vol. ii.) seems to imply that he was then living; but this cannot have been the case. Gennadius, his enemy, abdicated the patriarchate of Constantinople in 1458, having been raised to it in 1453. The public burning of Pletho's book was in the inter-

mediate time; and it is agreed that this was done after his death.

† Hody, p. 79., doubts whether Gaza's vindication of Aristotle were not merely verbal, in conversation with Bessarion; which is however implicitly contradicted by Boivin and Tiraboschi, who assert him to have written against Pletho. The comparison of Plato and Aristotle by George of Trebizond was published at Venice in 1523, as Heeren says, on the authority of Fabricius.

bizond, a far inferior man, with invectives against the Platonic philosophy and its founder. Others replied in the same tone ; and whether from ignorance or from rudeness, this controversy appears to have been managed as much with abuse of the lives and characters of two philosophers, dead nearly two thousand years, as with any rational discussion of their tenets. Both sides, however, strove to make out, what in fact was the ultimate object, that the doctrine they maintained was more consonant to the Christian religion than that of their adversaries. Cardinal Bessarion, a man of solid and elegant learning, replied to George of Trebizond in a book entitled *Adversus Calumniatorem Platonis* ; one of the first books that appeared from the Roman press, in 1470. This dispute may possibly have originated, at least in Greece, before 1450 ; and it was certainly continued beyond 1460, the writings both of George and Bessarion appearing to be rather of later date.*

15. Bessarion himself was so far from being as unjust towards Aristotle as his opponent was towards Plato, that he translated his metaphysics. That philosopher, though almost the idol of the schoolmen, lay still in some measure under the ban of the church, which had very gradually removed the prohibition she laid on his writings in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Nicolas V.

* The best account, and that from which later writers have freely borrowed, of this philosophical controversy, is by Boivin, in the second volume of the *Memoirs* of the Academy of Inscriptions, p. 15. Brucker, iv. 40., Buhle, ii. 107., and Tiraboschi, vi. 303., are my other authorities.

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III.

Marsilius
Ficinus.

first permitted them to be read without restriction in the universities.*

16. Cosmo de' Medici selected Marsilius Ficinus, as a youth of great promise, to be educated in the mysteries of Platonism, that he might become the chief and preceptor of the new academy; nor did the devotion of the young philosopher fall short of the patron's hope. Ficinus declares himself to have profited as much by the conversation of Cosmo as by the writings of Plato; but this is said in a dedication to Lorenzo, and the author has not, on other occasions, escaped the reproach of flattery. He began as early as 1456, at the age of twenty-three, to write on the Platonic philosophy; but being as yet ignorant of Greek, prudently gave way to the advice of Cosmo and Landino, that he should acquire more knowledge before he imparted it to the world.†

Invention
of printing.

17. The great glory of this decennial period is the invention of printing, or at least, as all must allow, its application to the purposes of useful learning. The reader will not expect a minute discussion of so long and unsettled a controversy as that which the origin of this art has furnished. For those who are little conversant with the subject, a very few particulars may be thought necessary.

Block
books.

18. About the end of the fourteenth century, we find a practice of taking impressions from engraved blocks of wood, sometimes for playing cards, which came into use not long before that time; some-

* Launoy de varia Aristotelis Fortuna in Academia Parisiensi, p. 44.

† Brucker, iv. 50. Roscoe.

times for rude cuts of saints.* The latter were frequently accompanied by a few lines of letters cut in the block. Gradually entire pages were impressed in this manner; and thus began what are called block books, printed in fixed characters, but never exceeding a very few leaves. Of these there exist nine or ten, often reprinted, as it is generally thought, between 1400 and 1440.† In using the word printed, it is of course not intended to prejudice the question as to the real art of printing. These block books seem to have been all executed in the Low Countries. They are said to have been followed by several editions of the short grammar of Donatus in wooden stereotype.‡ These also were printed in Holland. This mode of printing from blocks of wood has been practised in China from time immemorial.

19. The invention of printing, in the modern sense, from moveable letters, has been referred by most to Gutenberg, a native of Mentz, but settled at Strasburg. He is supposed to have conceived the idea before 1440, and to have spent the next ten years in making attempts at carrying it into effect, which some assert him to have done in short fugitive pieces, actually printed from his moveable wooden characters before 1450. But of the existence of these there seems to be no evidence.§ Gutenberg's priority is disputed by those who

Gutenberg
and Cos-
tar's
claims.

* Heinekke and others have proved that playing cards were known in Germany as early as 1299; but these were probably painted. Lambinet, *Origines de l'Imprimerie*. Singer's *History of Playing Cards*. The earliest cards were on parchment.

† Lambinet, Singer, Ottley, Dibdin, &c.

‡ Lambinet.

§ *Mémoires de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*. xvii. 762. Lambinet, p. 113.

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deem Lawrence Costar, of Haarlem, the real inventor of the art. According to a tradition, which seems not to be traced beyond the middle of the sixteenth century, but resting afterwards upon sufficient testimony to prove its local reception, Costar substituted moveable for fixed letters as early as 1430; and some have believed that a book called *Speculum humanæ Salvationis*, of very rude wooden characters, proceeded from the Haarlem press before any other that is generally recognised.* The tradition adds, that an unfaithful servant having fled with the secret, set up for himself at Strasburg or Mentz; and this treachery was originally ascribed to Gutenberg or Fust, but seems, since they have been manifestly cleared of it, to have been laid on one Gensfleisch, reputed to be the brother of Gutenberg.† The evidence, however, as to this, is highly precarious; and even if we were to admit the claims of Costar, there seems no fair reason to dispute that Gutenberg might also have struck out an idea, that surely did not require any extraordinary ingenuity, and which left the most important difficulties to be surmounted, as they undeniably were, by himself and his coadjutors.‡

Progress
of the in-
vention.

20. It is agreed by all, that about 1450, Gutenberg, having gone to Mentz, entered into partner-

* In Mr. Ottley's *History of Engraving*, the claims of Costar are strongly maintained, though chiefly on the authority of Meerman's proofs, which go to establish the local tradition. But the evidence of Ludovico Guicciardini is an answer to those who treat it as a forgery of Hadrian Junius.

Santander, Lambinet, and most recent investigators are for Mentz against Haarlem.

† Gensfleisch seems to have been the name of that branch of the Gutenberg family, to which the inventor of printing belonged. *Biogr. Univ.*, art. Gutenberg.

‡ Lambinet, p. 315.

ship with Fust, a rich merchant of that city, for the purpose of carrying the invention into effect, and that Fust supplied him with considerable sums of money. The subsequent steps are obscure. According to a passage in the *Annales Hirsargienses* of Trithemius, written sixty years afterwards, but on the authority of a grandson of Peter Schæffer, their assistant in the work, it was about 1452 that the latter brought the art to perfection, by devising an easier mode of casting types.* This passage has been interpreted, according to a lax construction, to mean, that Schæffer invented the method of casting types in a matrix; but seems more strictly to mean, that we owe to him the great improvement in letter-casting, namely, the punches of engraved steel, by which the matrices or moulds are struck, and without which, independent of the economy of labour, there could be no perfect uniformity of shape. Upon the former supposition, Schæffer may be reckoned the main inventor of the art of printing; for moveable wooden letters, though small books may possibly have been printed by means of them, are so inconvenient, and letters of cut metal so expensive, that few great works were likely to have passed through the press, till cast types were employed. Van Praet, however, believes the psalter of 1457 to have been printed from wooden characters; and some have conceived letters of cut metal to have been employed both in that and in the first Bible. Lambinet,

* Petrus Opilio de Gernsheim, tunc famulus inventoris primi Joannis Fust, homo ingeniosus et prudens, faciliorem modum fundendi characteras excogitavit, et artem, ut nunc est, complevit. Lambinet, i. 101. See Daunou contra. Id. 417.

CHAP.
III.

who thinks "the essence of the art of printing is in the engraved punch," naturally gives the chief credit to Schæffer*; but this is not the more usual opinion.

First
printed
Bible.

21. The earliest book, properly so called, is now generally believed to be the Latin Bible, commonly called the Mazarin Bible, a copy having been found, about the middle of the last century, in cardinal Mazarin's library at Paris.† It is remarkable, that its existence was unknown before; for it can hardly be called a book of very extraordinary scarcity, nearly twenty copies being in different libraries, half of them in those of private persons in England.‡ No date appears in this Bible, and some have referred its publication to 1452, or even to 1450, which few perhaps would at present maintain; while others have thought the year 1455 rather more probable.§ In a copy belonging to the royal library at Paris, an entry is made, importing that it was completed in binding and illuminating at Mentz, on the feast of the Assumption (Aug. 15.), 1456. But Trithemius, in the passage above quoted, seems to intimate that

* ii. 213. In another place, he divides the praise better: Gloire donc à Gutenberg, qui, le premier, conçut l'idée de la typographie, en imaginant la mobilité des caractères, qui en est l'âme; gloire à Fust, qui en fit usage avec lui, et sans lequel nous ne jouirions peut-être pas de ce bienfait; gloire à Schæffer, à qui nous devons tout le mécanisme, et toutes les merveilles de l'art. i. 119.

† The Cologne chronicle says: Anno Domini 1450, qui jubilæus erat, cœptum est imprimi, primus-

que liber, qui excudebatur, biblia fuere Latina.

‡ Bibliotheca Sussexiana, i. 293. (1827.) The number there enumerated is eighteen; nine in public, and nine in private libraries; three of the former, and all the latter, English.

§ Lambinet thinks it was probably not begun before 1453, nor published till the end of 1455. i. 130. See, on this Bible, an article by Dr. Dibdin in Valpy's Classical Journal, No. 8.; which collects the testimonies of his predecessors.

no book had been printed in 1452; and, considering the lapse of time that would naturally be employed in such an undertaking during the infancy of the art, and that we have no other printed book of the least importance to fill up the interval till 1457, and also that the binding and illuminating the above-mentioned copy is likely to have followed the publication at no great length of time, we may not err in placing its appearance in the year 1455, which will secure its hitherto unimpeached priority in the records of bibliography.*

22. It is a very striking circumstance, that the high-minded inventors of this great art tried at the very outset so bold a flight as the printing an entire Bible, and executed it with astonishing success. It was Minerva leaping on earth in her divine strength and radiant armour, ready at the moment of her nativity to subdue and destroy her enemies. The Mazarin Bible is printed, some copies on vellum, some on paper of choice quality, with strong, black, and tolerably handsome characters, but with some want of uniformity, which has led, perhaps unreasonably, to a doubt whether they were cast in a matrix. We may see in imagination this venerable and splendid volume leading up the crowded myriads of its followers, and im-

Beauty of
the book.

* It is very difficult to pronounce on the means employed in the earliest books, which are almost all controverted. This Bible is thought by Fournier, himself a letter founder, to be printed from wooden types; by Meerman, from types cut in metal; by Heinekke and Daunou from cast types, which is most probable. Lambinet, i. 417.

Daunou does not believe that any book was printed with types cut either in wood or metal; and that, after block books, there were none but with cast letters like those now in use, invented by Gutenberg, perfected by Schæffer, and first employed by them and Fust in the Mazarin Bible. Id. p. 423.

CHAP.
III.Early
printed
sheets.

ploring, as it were, a blessing on the new art, by dedicating its first fruits to the service of Heaven.

23. A metrical exhortation, in the German language, to take arms against the Turks, dated in 1454, has been retrieved in the present century. If this date unequivocally refers to the time of printing, which does not seem a necessary consequence, it is the earliest loose sheet that is known to be extant. It is said to be in the type of what is called the Bamberg Bible, which we shall soon have to mention. Two editions of Letters of indulgence from Nicolas V., bearing the date of 1454, are extant in single printed sheets, and two more editions of 1455*; but it has justly been observed, that, even if published before the Mazarin Bible, the printing of that great volume must have commenced long before. An almanac for the year 1457 has also been detected; and as fugitive sheets of this kind are seldom preserved, we may justly conclude that the art of printing was not dormant, so far as these light productions are concerned. A Donatus, with Schæffer's name, but no date, may or may not be older than a psalter published in 1457 by Fust and Schæffer (the partnership with Gutenberg having been dissolved in November 1455, and having led to a dispute and litigation), with a colophon, or notice, subjoined in the last page, in these words :—

* Brunet, *Supplement au Manuel du Libraire*. It was not known till lately that more than one edition out of these four was in existence. Santander thinks their publication was after 1460. *Dict. Bibliographique du 15me siècle*, i. 92. But this seems improbable, from the transitory character of the subject. He argues from a resemblance in the letters to those used by Fust and Schæffer in the *Durandi Rationale* of 1459.

Psalmorum codex venustate capitalium decoratus, rubricationibusque sufficienter distinctus, ad inventionem artificiosa imprimendi ac caracterizandi, absque calami ulla exaratione sic effigiatus, et ad eusebiam Dei industrie est summatus. Per Johannem Fust, civem Moguntinum, et Petrum Schæffer de Gernsheim, anno Domini millesimo cccclvii. In vigilia Assumptionis.*

A colophon, substantially similar, is subjoined to several of the Fustine editions. And this seems hard to reconcile with the story that Fust sold his impressions at Paris, as late as 1463, for manuscripts.

24. Another psalter was printed by Fust and Schæffer with similar characters in 1459; and in the same year, Durandi Rationale, a treatise on the liturgical offices of the church; of which Van Praet says, that it is perhaps the earliest with cast types to which Fust and Schæffer have given their name and a date.† The two psalters he conceives to have been printed from wood. But this would be disputed by other eminent judges.‡ In 1460, a work of considerable size, the Catholicon of Balbi, came out from an opposition press, established at Mentz by Gutenberg. The Clementine Constitutions, part of the canon law, were also printed by him in the same year.

Psalter of
1459.
Other early
books.

* Dibdin's *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*. Biogr. Univ., Gutenberg, &c. In the *Donatus* above mentioned, the method of printing is also mentioned: *Explicit Donatus arte nova imprimendi seu caracterizandi per Petrum de Gernsheim in urbe Moguntina effigiatus*. Lambinet considers this and the Bible to be the first specimens of typo-

graphy, for he doubts the *Literæ Indulgentiarum*, through probably with no cause.

† Lambinet, i. 154.

‡ Lambinet, Dibdin. The former thinks the inequality of letters observed in the psalter of 1457, may proceed from their being cast in a matrix of plaster or clay, instead of metal.

CHAP.
III.Bible of
Pfister.

25. These are the only monuments of early typography acknowledged to come within the present decennium. A Bible without a date, supposed by most to have been printed by Pfister at Bamberg, though ascribed by others to Gutenberg himself, is reckoned by good judges certainly prior to 1462, and, perhaps, as early as 1460. Daunou and others refer it to 1461. The antiquities of typography, after all the pains bestowed upon them, are not unlikely to receive still further elucidation in the course of time.

Greek first
taught at
Paris.

26. On the 19th of January, 1458, as Crevier, with a minuteness becoming the subject, informs us, the university of Paris received a petition from Gregory, a native of Tiferno, in the kingdom of Naples, to be appointed teacher of Greek. His request was granted, and a salary of one hundred crowns assigned to him, on condition that he should teach gratuitously, and deliver two lectures every day, one on the Greek language, and the other on the art of rhetoric.* From this auspicious circumstance Crevier deduces the restoration of ancient literature in the university of Paris, and consequently in the kingdom of France. For above two hundred years the scholastic logic and philosophy had crushed polite letters. No mention is made of rhetoric, that is, of the art that instructs in the ornaments of style, in any statute or record of the university since the beginning of the thirteenth century. If the Greek language, as Crevier supposes, had not been wholly neglected,

* Crevier, *Hist. de l'Univ. de Paris*, iv. 243.

it was, at least, so little studied, that entire neglect would have been practically the same.

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27. This concession was perhaps unwillingly made, and, as frequently happens in established institutions, it left the prejudices of the ruling party rather stronger than before. The teachers of Greek and rhetoric were specially excluded from the privileges of regency by the faculty of arts. These branches of knowledge were looked upon as unessential appendages to a good education, very much as the modern languages are treated in our English schools and universities at this day. A bigoted adherence to old systems, and a lurking reluctance that the rising youth should become superior in knowledge to ourselves, were no peculiar evil spirits that haunted the university of Paris, though none ever stood more in need of a thorough exorcism. For many years after this time, the Greek and Latin languages were thus taught by permission, and with very indifferent success.

Leave un-
willingly
granted.

28. Purbach, or Peurbach, native of a small Austrian town of that name, has been called the first restorer of mathematical science in Europe. Ignorant of Greek, and possessing only a bad translation of Ptolemy, lately made by George of Trebizond*, he yet was able to explain the rules of physical astronomy and the theory of the planetary motions far better than his predecessors.

Purbach ;
his mathe-
matical dis-
coveries.

* Montucla. Biogr. Univ. It is however certain, and is admitted by Delambre, the author of this article in the Biogr. Univ., that Purbach made considerable progress in abridging and explaining the text of this translation, which, if ignorant of the original, he must have done by his mathematical knowledge. Kästner, ii. 521.

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But his chief merit was in the construction of trigonometrical tables. The Greeks had introduced the sexagesimal division, not only of the circle, but of the radius, and calculated chords according to this scale. The Arabians, who about the ninth century first substituted the sine, or half chord of the double arch, in their tables, preserved the same graduation. Purbach made one step towards a decimal scale, which the new notation by Arabic numerals rendered highly convenient, by dividing the radius, or sinus totus, as it was then often called, into 600,000 parts, and gave rules for computing the sines of arcs; which he himself also calculated, for every minute of the quadrant, as Delambre and Kästner think, or for every ten minutes, according to Gassendi and Hutton, in parts of this radius. The tables of Albaten the Arabian geometer, the inventor, as far as appears, of sines, had extended only to quarters of a degree.*

Other ma-
thema-
ticians.

29. Purbach died young, in 1461, when, by the advice of cardinal Bessarion, he was on the point of setting out for Italy, in order to learn Greek. His mantle descended on Regiomontanus, a disciple, who went beyond his master, though he has sometimes borne away his due credit. A mathematician rather earlier than Purbach was Nicolas Cusanus, raised to the dignity of cardinal in 1448.

* Montucla, *Hist. des Mathématiques*, i. 539. Hutton's *Mathematical Dictionary*, and his *Introduction to Logarithms*. Gassendi, *Vita Purbachii*. *Biogr. Univ. Peurbach* (by Delambre). Kästner,

Geschichte der Mathematik. i. 529—543. 572.; ii. 319. Gassendi twice gives 6,000,000 for the parts of Purbach's radius. None of these writers seem comparable in accuracy to Kästner.

He was by birth a German, and obtained a considerable reputation for several kinds of knowledge.* But he was chiefly distinguished for the tenet of the earth's motion, which, however, according to Montucla, he proposed only as an ingenious hypothesis. Fioravanti, of Bologna, is said, on contemporary authority, to have removed, in 1455, a tower with its foundation, to a distance of several feet, and to have restored to the perpendicular one at Cento seventy-five feet high, which had swerved five feet.†

SECT. III. 1460—1470.

Progress of Art of Printing — Learning in Italy and rest of Europe.

30. THE progress of that most important invention, which illustrated the preceding ten years, is the chief subject of our consideration in the present. Many books, it is to be observed, even of the superior class, were printed, especially in the first thirty years after the invention of the art, without date of time or place; and this was, of course, more frequently the case with smaller or fugitive pieces. A catalogue, therefore, of books that can be certainly referred to any particular period must always be very defective. A collec-

Progress of
printing in
Germany.

* A work upon statics, or rather upon the weight of bodies in water, by Cusanus, seems chiefly remarkable, as it shows both a disposition to ascertain physical truths by experiment, and an extraordi-

nary misapprehension of the results. See Kästner, ii. 122. It is published in an edition of Vitruvius, Strasburg, 1550.

† Tiraboschi. Montucla. Biogr. Univ.

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tion of fables in German was printed at Bamberg in 1461, and another book in 1462, by Pfister, at the same place.* The Bible which bears his name has been already mentioned. In 1462 Fust published a Bible, commonly called the Mentz Bible, and which passed for the earliest till that in the Mazarin library came to light. But in the same year, the city having been taken by Adolphus count of Nassau, the press of Fust was broken up, and his workmen, whom he had bound by an oath to secrecy, dispersed themselves into different quarters. Released thus, as they seem to have thought, from their obligation, they exercised their skill in other places. It is certain, that the art of printing, soon after this, spread into the towns near the Rhine; not only Bamberg, as before mentioned, but Cologne, Strasburg, Augsburg, and one or two more places, sent forth books before the conclusion of these ten years. Nor was Mentz altogether idle, after the confusion occasioned by political events had abated. Yet the whole number of books printed with dates of time and place, in the German empire, from 1461 to 1470, according to Panzer, was only twenty-four; of which five were Latin, and two German, Bibles. The only known classical works are two editions of Cicero de Officiis, at Mentz, in 1465 and 1466, and another about the latter year at Cologne by Ulric Zell; perhaps also the treatise de Finibus, and that de Senectute, at the same place. There is also reason to suspect that a Virgil, a Valerius Maximus, and a Terence, printed by Mentelin at Strasburg, without a date, are as

* Lambinet.

old as 1470; and the same has been thought of one or two editions of Ovid de Arte Amandi, by Zell of Cologne. One book, Joannis de Turrecremata Explanatio in psalterium, was printed by Zainer, at Cracow, in 1465. This is remarkable, as we have no evidence of the Polish press from that time till 1500. Several copies of this book are said to exist in Poland; yet doubts of its authenticity have been entertained. Zainer settled soon afterwards at Augsburg.*

31. It was in 1469 that Ulric Gering, with two more, who had been employed as pressmen by Fust at Mentz, were induced by Fichet and La-pierre, rectors of the Sorbonne, to come to Paris, where several books were printed in 1470 and 1471. The epistles of Gasparin of Barziza appear, by some verses subjoined, to have been the earliest among these.† Panzer has increased to eighteen the list of books printed before the close of 1472.‡

32. But there seem to be unquestionable proofs that a still earlier specimen of typography is due to an English printer, the famous Caxton. His Recueil des Histoires de Troye appears to have been printed during the life of Philip duke of Burgundy, and consequently before June 15. 1467. The place of publication, certainly within the duke's dominions, has not been conjectured. It is, therefore, by several years the earliest printed

* Panzer, Annales Typographici. Biographie Universelle, Zainer.

† The last four of these lines are the following:—

Primos ecce libros quos hæc industria finxit,

Francorum in terris, ædibus
atque tuis.
Michael, Udalricus, Martinus-
que magistri
Hosimpresserunt, et faciunt alios.

‡ See Greswell's Early Parisian Press.

Introduced
into France.

Caxton's
first works.

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book in the French language. A Latin speech by Russell, ambassador of Edward IV. to Charles of Burgundy, in 1469, is the next publication of Caxton. This was also printed in the Low Countries.*

Printing
exercised
in Italy.

33. A more splendid scene was revealed in Italy. Sweynheim and Pannartz, two workmen of Fust, set up a press, doubtless with encouragement and patronage, at the monastery of Subiaco in the Apennines, a place chosen either on account of the numerous manuscripts it contained, or because the monks were of the German nation; and hence an edition of Lactantius issued in October, 1465, which one, no longer extant, of Donatus's little grammar is said to have preceded. An edition of Cicero de Officiis, without a date, is referred by some to the year 1466. In 1467, after printing Augustin de Civitate Dei, and Cicero de Oratore, the two Germans left Subiaco for Rome, where they sent forth not less than twenty-three editions of ancient Latin authors before the close of 1470. Another German, John of Spire, established a press at Venice, in 1469, beginning with Cicero's Epistles. In that and the next year, almost as many classical works were printed at Venice as at Rome, either by John and his brother Vindelin, or by a Frenchman, Nicolas Jenson. Instances are said to exist of books printed by unknown persons at Milan, in 1469; and in 1470, Zarot, a German, opened there a fertile source of typography, though but

* Dibdin's *Typographical Antiquities*. This is not noticed in the *Biographie Universelle*, nor in Brunet; an omission hardly excusable.

two Latin authors were published that year. An edition of Cicero's Epistles appeared also in the little town of Foligno. The whole number of books that had issued from the press in Italy at the close of that year amounts, according to Panzer, to eighty-two; exclusive of those which have no date, some of which may be referrible to this period.

34. Cosmo de' Medici died in 1464. But the happy impulse he had given to the restoration of letters was not suspended; and in the last year of the present decad, his wealth and his influence over the republic of Florence had devolved on a still more conspicuous character, his grandson Lorenzo, himself worthy, by his literary merits, to have done honour to any patron, had not a more prosperous fortune called him to become one.

Lorenzo de'
Medici.

35. The epoch of Lorenzo's accession to power is distinguished by a circumstance hardly less honourable than the restoration of classical learning, — the revival of native genius in poetry, after the slumber of near a hundred years. After the death of Petrarch, many wrote verses, but none excelled in the art; though Muratori has praised the poetry down to 1400, especially that of Guisto di Conti, whom he does not hesitate to place among the first poets of Italy.* But that of the fifteenth century is abandoned by all critics as rude, feeble, and ill expressed. The historians of literature scarcely deign to mention a few names, or the editors of selections to extract a few sonnets. The

Italian
poetry of
fifteenth
century.

* Muratori della perfetta poesia, p. 193. Bouterwek, Gesch. der Ital. Poesie, i. 216.

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romances of chivalry in rhyme, *Buovo d' Antona*, *la Spagna*, *l'Ancroja*, are only deserving to be remembered as they led in some measure to the great poems of Boiardo and Ariosto. In themselves they are mean and prosaic. It is vain to seek a general cause for this sterility in the cultivation of Latin and Greek literature, which we know did not obstruct the brilliancy of Italian poetry in the next age. There is only one cause for the want of great men in any period;—nature does not think fit to produce them. They are no creatures of education and circumstance.

Italian
prose of
same age.

36. The Italian prose literature of this interval from the age of Petrarch would be comprised in a few volumes. Some historical memoirs may be found in Muratori, but far the chief part of his collection is in Latin. Leonard Aretin wrote lives of Dante and Petrarch in Italian, which, according to Corniani, are neither valuable for their information nor for their style. The *Vita Civile* of Palmieri seems to have been written some time after the middle of the fifteenth century; but of this Corniani says, that having wished to give a specimen, on account of the rarity of Italian in that age, he had abandoned his intention, finding that it was hardly possible to read two sentences in the *Vita Civile* without meeting some barbarism or incorrectness. The novelists Sacchetti, and Ser Giovanni, author of the *Pecorone*, who belong to the end of the fourteenth century, are read by some; their style is familiar and idiomatic; but Crescimbeni praises that of the former. Corniani bestows some praise on Passavanti and Pandolfini;

the first a religious writer, not much later than Boccaccio; the latter a noble Florentine, author of a moral dialogue in the beginning of the fifteenth century. Filelfo, among his voluminous productions, has an Italian commentary on Petrarch, of which Corniani speaks very slightly. The commentary of Landino on Dante is much better esteemed; but it was not published till 1481.

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37. It was on occasion of a tournament, wherein Lorenzo himself and his brother Julian had appeared in the lists, that poems were composed by Luigi Pulci, and by Politian, then a youth, or rather a boy, the latter of which displayed more harmony, spirit, and imagination, than any that had been written since the death of Petrarch.* It might thus be seen, that there was no real incompatibility between the pursuits of ancient literature and the popular language of fancy and sentiment; and that, if one gave chastity and elegance of style, a more lively and natural expression of the mind could best be attained by the other.

Giostra of
Politian.

38. This period was not equally fortunate for the learned in other parts of Italy. Ferdinand of Naples, who came to the throne in 1458, proved no adequate representative of his father Alfonso. But

Paul II.
persecutes
the learned.

* Extracts from this poem will be found in Roscoe's Lorenzo, and in Sismondi, *Littérature on Midi*, ii. 43., who praises it highly, as the Italian critics have done, and as by the passages quoted it seems well to deserve. Roscoe supposes Politian to be only fourteen years old when he wrote the *Giostra di Giuliano*. But the lines he quotes allude to Lorenzo

as chief of the republic, which could not be said before the death of Pietro in December 1469. If he wrote them at sixteen, it is extraordinary enough; but these two years make an immense difference. Ginguéné is of opinion, that they do not allude to the tournament of 1468, but to one in 1473.

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at Rome they encountered a serious calamity. A few zealous scholars, such as Pomponius Lætus, Platina, Callimachus Experiens, formed an academy in order to converse together on subjects of learning, and communicate to each other the results of their private studies. Dictionaries, indexes, and all works of compilation being very deficient, this was the best substitute for the labour of perusing the whole body of Latin antiquity. They took Roman names; an innocent folly, long after practised in Europe. The pope, however, Paul II., thought fit, in 1468, to arrest all this society on charges of conspiracy against his life, for which there was certainly no foundation, and of setting up Pagan superstitions against Christianity, of which, in this instance, there seems to have been no proof. They were put to the torture, and kept in prison a twelvemonth; when the tyrant, who is said to have vowed this in his first rage, set them all at liberty; but it was long before the Roman academy recovered any degree of vigour.*

Mathias
Corvinus.

39. We do not discover as yet much substantial encouragement to literature in any country on this side the Alps, with the exception of one where it was least to be anticipated. Mathias Corvinus, king of Hungary, from his accession in 1458 to his death in 1490, endeavoured to collect round himself the learned of Italy, and to strike light

* Tiraboschi, vi. 93. Ginguéné. Brucker. Corniani, ii. 280. This writer, inferior to none in his acquaintance with the literature of the fifteenth century, but, though

not an ecclesiastic, always favourable to the court of Rome, seems to strive to lay the blame on the imprudence of Platina.

into the midst of the depths of darkness that encompassed his country. He determined, therefore, to erect an university, which, by the original plan, was to have been in a distinct city; but the Turkish wars compelled him to fix it at Buda. He availed himself of the dispersion of libraries after the capture of Constantinople to purchase Greek manuscripts, and employed four transcribers at Florence, besides thirty at Buda, to enrich his collection. Thus, at his death, it is said that the royal library at Buda contained 50,000 volumes; a number that appears wholly incredible.* Three hundred ancient statues are reported to have been placed in the same repository. But when the city fell into the hands of the 'Turks in 1527, these noble treasures were dispersed, and in great measure destroyed. Though the number of books, as is just observed, must have been exaggerated, it is possible that neither the burning of the Alexandrian library by Omar, if it ever occurred, nor any other single calamity recorded in history, except the two captures of Constantinople itself, has been more fatally injurious to literature; and, with due regard to the good intentions of Mathias Corvinus, it is deeply to be regretted that the inestimable relics once rescued from the barbarian Ottomans, should have been accumulated in a situation of so little security against their devastating arms.†

His li-
brary.

* The library collected by Nicolas V. contained only 5000 manuscripts. The volumes printed in Europe before the death of Corvinus would probably be reckoned highly at 15000. Hee-

ren suspects the number 50,000 to be hyperbolic; and in fact there can be no doubt of it.

† Brucker, Roscoe, Gibbon. Heeren, p. 173., who refers to several modern books expressly

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Slight signs
of literature
in England.

40. England under Edward IV. presents an appearance, in the annals of publication, about as barren as under Edward the Confessor ; there is, I think, neither in Latin nor in English, a single book that we can refer to this decennial period.* Yet we find a few symptoms, not to be overlooked, of incipient regard for literature. Leland enumerates some Englishmen who travelled to Italy, perhaps before 1460, in order to become disciples of the younger Guarini at Ferrara : Robert Fleming, William Gray, bishop of Ely, John Free, John Gunthorpe, and a very accomplished nobleman, John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester. It is but fairness to give credit to these men for their love of learning, and to observe, that they preceded any whom we could mention on sure grounds either in France or Germany. We trace, however, no distinct fruits from their acquisitions. But, though very few had the means of attaining that on which we set a high value in literature, the mere rudiments of grammatical learning were communicated to many. Nor were munificent patrons, testators, in the words of Burke, to a posterity which they embraced as their own, wanting in this latter period of the middle ages. William of Wykeham, chan-

relating to the fate of this library. Part of it, however, found its way to that of Vienna.

* The university of Oxford, according to Wood, as well as the church generally, stood very low about this time: the grammar schools were laid aside; degrees were conferred on undeserving persons for money. A. D. 1455,

1466. He had previously mentioned those schools as kept up in the university under the superintendence of masters of arts. A. D. 1442. The statutes of Magdalen College, founded in the reign of Edward, provide for a certain degree of learning.—Chandler's *Life of Waynflete*, p. 200.

cellor of England under Richard II. and bishop of Winchester, founded a school in that city, and a college at Oxford in connection with it, in 1373.* Henry VI., in imitation of him, became the founder of Eton school, and of King's College, Cambridge, about 1442.† In each of these schools seventy boys, and in each college seventy fellows and scholars, are maintained by these princely endowments. It is unnecessary to observe, that they are still the amplest, as they are much the earliest, foundations for the support of grammatical learning in England. What could be taught in these, or any other schools at this time, the reader has been enabled to judge; it must have been the Latin language, through indifferent books of grammar, and with the perusal of very few heathen writers of antiquity. In the curious and unique collection of the Paston letters we find one from a boy at Eton in 1468, wherein he gives two Latin verses, not very good, of his own composition.‡ I am sensible that the mention of such a circumstance may appear trifling, especially to foreigners: but it is not a trifle to illustrate by any fact the gradual progress of knowledge among the laity; first in the mere elements of reading and writing, as we did in a former chapter; and

* Lowth's Life of Wykeham. He permits in his statutes a limited number of sons of gentlemen (gentilium) to be educated in his school. Chandler's Life of Waynflete, p. 5.

† Waynflete became the first head master of Eton in 1442. Chandler, p. 26.

‡ Vol. I. p. 301. Of William

Paston, author of these lines, it is said, some years before, that he had "gone to school to a Lombard called Karol Giles, to learn and to be read in poetry, or else in French. He said, that he would be as glad and as fain of a good book of French or of poetry as my master Falstaff would be to purchase a fairmanor." p.173. (1459.)

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Paston
letters.

now, in the fifteenth century, in such grammatical instruction as could be imparted. This boy of the Paston family was well born, and came from a distance; nor was he in training for the church, since he seems by this letter to have had marriage in contemplation.

41. But the Paston letters are, in other respects, an important testimony to the progressive condition of society; and come in as a precious link in the chain of the moral history of England, which they alone in this period supply. They stand indeed singly, as far as I know, in Europe; for though it is highly probable that in the archives of Italian families, if not in France or Germany, a series of merely private letters equally ancient may be concealed, I do not recollect that any have been published. They are all written in the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., except a few, that extend as far as Henry VII., by different members of a wealthy and respectable, but not noble, family; and are, therefore, pictures of the life of the English gentry in that age.* We are merely concerned with their evidence as to the state of literature. And this upon the whole is more favourable than, from the want of authorship in those reigns, we should be led to anticipate. It is plain that several members of the family, male and female, wrote not only grammatically, but

* This collection is in five quarto volumes, and has become scarce. The length has been doubled by an injudicious proceeding of the editor, in printing the original orthography and abbreviations of the letters on each

left-hand page, and a more legible modern form on the right. As orthography is of little importance, and abbreviations of none at all, it would have been sufficient to have given a single specimen.

with a fluency and facility, an epistolary expertness, which implies the habitual use of the pen. Their expression is much less formal and quaint than that of modern novelists, when they endeavour to feign the familiar style of ages much later than the fifteenth century. Some of them mix Latin with their English, very bad, and probably for the sake of concealment; and Ovid is once mentioned as a book to be sent from one to another.* It appears highly probable, that such a series of letters, with so much vivacity and pertinence, would not have been written by any family of English gentry in the reign of Richard II., and much less before. It is hard to judge from a single case; but the letter of Lady Pelham, quoted in the first chapter, is ungrammatical and unintelligible. The seed, therefore, was now rapidly germinating beneath the ground; and thus we may perceive that the publication of books is not the sole test of the intellectual advance of a people. I may add, that although the middle of the fifteenth century was the period in which the fewest books were written, a greater number, in the opinion of experienced judges, were transcribed in that than in any former age.

42. It may be observed here, with reference to the state of learning generally in England down to the age immediately preceding the Reformation,

Low condition of public libraries.

* "As to Ovid *de arte amandi*, I shall send him you next week, for I have him not now ready." *iv.* 175. This was between 1463 and 1469, according to the editor. We do not know positively of any edition of Ovid *de arte aman-*

di so early; but Zell of Cologne is supposed to have printed one before 1470, as has been mentioned above. Whether the book to be sent were in print, or manuscript, must be left to the sagacity of critics.

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that Leland, in the fourth volume of his *Collectanea*, has given several lists of books in colleges and monasteries, which do not by any means warrant the supposition of a tolerable acquaintance with ancient literature. We find, however, some of the recent translations made in Italy from Greek authors. The clergy, in fact, were now retrograding, while the laity were advancing; and when this was the case, the ascendancy of the former was near its end.

Rowley.

43. I have said that there was not a new book written within these ten years. In the days of our fathers, it would have been necessary at least to mention as a forgery the celebrated poems attributed to Thomas Rowley. But, probably, no one person living believes in their authenticity; nor should I have alluded to so palpable a fabrication at all, but for the curious circumstance that a very similar trial of literary credulity has not long since been essayed in France. A gentleman of the name of Surville published a collection of poems, alleged to have been written by Clotilde de Surville, a poetess of the fifteenth century. The muse of the Ardèche warbled her notes during a longer life than the monk of Bristow; and having sung the relief of Orleans by the Maid of Arc in 1429, lived to pour her swan-like chant on the battle of Fornova in 1495. Love, however, as much as war, is her theme; and it was a remarkable felicity that she rendered an ode of her prototype Sappho into French verse, many years before any one else in France could have seen it. But having, like Rowley, anticipated too much the

Clotilde de
Surville.

style and sentiments of a later period, she has, like him, fallen into the numerous ranks of the dead who never were alive.*

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SECT. IV. 1471—1480.

*The same Subjects continued — Lorenzo de' Medici — Physical Controversy
— Mathematical Sciences.*

44. THE books printed in Italy during these ten years amount, according to Panzer, to 1297; of which 234 are editions of ancient classical authors. Books without date are of course not included; and the list must not be reckoned complete as to others.

Number of
books
printed in
Italy.

45. A press was established at Florence by Lorenzo, in which Cennini, a goldsmith, was employed; the first printer, except Caxton and Jenson, who was not a German. Virgil was pub-

* Auguis, *Recueil des Poètes*, vol. ii. Biogr. Univ., Surville. Villemain, *Cours de Littérature*, vol. ii. Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, xiii. 593. The forgery is by no means so gross as that of Chatterton; but, as M. Sismondi says, "We have only to compare Clotilde with the duke of Orleans, or Villon." The following lines, quoted by him, will give the reader a fair specimen:—

Suivons l'amour, tel en soit le danger;

Cy nous attend sur lits charmans de mousse.

A des rigneurs; qui voudroit s'en venger?

Qui (même alors que tout désir s'émousse)

Au prix fatal de ne plus y songer?

Regne sur moi, cher tyran, dont les armes

Ne me sauroient porter coups trop puissans!

Pour m'épargner n'en crois onc a mes larmes;

Sont de plaisir, tant plus auront de charmes

Tes dards aigus, que seront plus cuisans.

It has been justly remarked, that the extracts from Clotilde in the *Recueil des anciens Poètes* occupy too much space, while the genuine writers of the fifteenth century appear in very scanty specimens.

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lished in 1471. Several other Italian cities began to print in this period. The first edition of Dante issued from Foligno in 1472; it has been improbably, as well as erroneously, referred to Mentz. Petrarch had been published in 1470, and Boccace in 1471. They were reprinted several times before the close of this decad.

First Greek
printed.

46. No one had attempted to cast Greek types in sufficient number for an entire book; though a few occur in the early publications by Sweynheim and Pannartz*; while in those printed afterwards at Venice, Greek words are inserted by the pen; till, in 1476, Zarot of Milan had the honour of giving the Greek grammar of Constantine Lascaris to the world.† This was followed in 1480 by Craston's lexicon, a very imperfect vocabulary; but which for many years continued to be the only assistance of the kind to which a student could have recourse. The author was an Italian.

Study of
antiquities.

47. Ancient learning is to be divided into two great departments; the knowledge of what is contained in the works of Greek and Roman authors,

* Greek types first appear in a treatise of Jerome, printed at Rome in 1468. Heeren, from Panzer.

† Lascaris Grammatica Græca, Mediolani ex recognitione Demetrii Cretensis per Dionysium Paravinum, 4to. The characters in this rare volume are elegant and of a moderate size. The earliest specimens of Greek printing consist of detached passages and citations, found in a very few of the first printed copies of Latin authors, such as the Lactantius of

1465, the Aulus Gellius and Apuleius of Sweynheim and Pannartz, 1469, and some works of Bessarion about the same time. In all these it is remarkable that the Greek typography is legibly and creditably executed, whereas the Greek introduced into the Officia et Paradoxa of Cicero, Milan 1474, by Zarot, is so deformed as to be scarcely legible. I am indebted for the whole of this note to Greswell's Early Parisian Greek Press, i. 1.

and that of the *materiel*, if I may use the word, which has been preserved in a bodily shape, and is sometimes known by the name of antiquities. Such are buildings, monuments, inscriptions, coins, medals, vases, instruments, which by gradual accumulation have thrown a powerful light upon ancient history and literature. The abundant riches of Italy in these remains could not be overlooked as soon as the spirit of admiration for all that was Roman began to be kindled. Petrarch himself formed a little collection of coins; and his contemporary Pastrengo was the first who copied inscriptions; but in the early part of the fifteenth century, her scholars and her patrons of letters began to collect the scattered relics, which almost every region presented to them.* Niccolo Niccoli, according to the funeral oration of Poggio, possessed a series of medals, and even wrote a treatise in Italian, correcting the common orthography of Latin words, on the authority of inscriptions and coins. The love of collections increased from this time; the Medici and other rich patrons of letters spared no expense in accumulating these treasures of the antiquary. Ciriacus of Ancona, about 1440, travelled into the east in order to copy inscriptions; but he was naturally exposed to deceive himself and to be deceived; nor has he escaped the suspicion of imposture, or at least of excessive credulity.†

* Tiraboschi, vols. v. and vi. Andrès, ix. 196.

† Tiraboschi. Andrès, ix. 199. Ciriaco has not wanted advocates; some of the inscriptions he was

accused of having forged have turned out to be authentic; and it is presumed in his favour, that others which do not appear may have perished since his time.

CHAP.
III.Works on
that sub-
ject.

48. The first who made his researches of this kind collectively known to the world, was Biondo Flavio, or Flavio Biondo,—for the names may be found in a different order, but more correctly in the first *,—secretary to Eugenius IV., and to his successors. His long residence at Rome inspired him with the desire, and gave him the opportunity, of describing her imperial ruins. In a work, dedicated to Eugenius IV., who died in 1447, but not printed till 1471, entitled, *Romæ Instauratæ libri tres*, he describes, examines, and explains by the testimonies of ancient authors, the numerous monuments of Rome. In another, *Romæ Triumphantis libri decem*, printed about 1472, he treats of the government, laws, religion, ceremonies, military discipline, and other antiquities of the republic. A third work, compiled at the request of Alfonso king of Naples, and printed in 1474, called *Italia Illustrata*, contains a description of all Italy, divided into its ancient fourteen regions. Though Biondo Flavio was almost the first to hew his way into the rock, which should cause his memory to be respected, it has naturally happened, that his works being imperfect and faulty, in comparison with those of the great antiquaries of the sixteenth century, they have not found a place in the col-

Biogr. Univ., Cyriaque. One that rests on his authority is that which is supposed to record the persecution of the Christians in Spain under Nero. See Lardner's Jewish and Heathen Testimonies,

vol. i., who, though by no means a credulous critic, inclines to its genuineness.

* Zeno, *Dissertationi Vossiane*, i. 229.

lection of Grævius, and are hardly remembered by name.*

CHAP.
III.

Public-
ations in
Germany.

49. In Germany and the Low Countries the art of printing began to be exercised at Deventer, Utrecht, Louvain, Basle, Ulm, and other places, and in Hungary at Buda. We find, however, very few ancient writers; the whole list of what can pass for classics being about thirteen. One or two editions of parts of Aristotle in Latin, from translations lately made in Italy, may be added. Yet it was not the length of manuscripts that discouraged the German printers; for besides their editions of the Scriptures, Mentelin of Strasburg published, in 1473, the great encyclopædia of Vincent of Beauvais, in ten volumes folio, generally bound in four; and, in 1474, a similar work of Berchorius, or Berchœur, in three other folios. The contrast between these labours and those of his Italian contemporaries is very striking.

50. Florus and Sallust were printed at Paris In France early in this decad, and twelve more classical authors at the same place before its termination. An edition of Cicero ad Herennium appeared at Angers in 1476, and one of Horace at Caen, in 1480. The press of Lyons also sent forth several works, but none of them classical. It has been

* A superior treatise of the same age on the antiquities of the Roman city is by Bernard Rucellai (*de urbe Romæ*, in *Rer. Ital. Script. Florent.* vol. ii.) But it was not published before the eighteenth century. Rucellai wrote some historical works in a very good Latin style, and was

distinguished also in the political revolutions of Florence. After the death of Lorenzo, he became the protector of the Florentine academy, for the members of which he built a palace with gardens. Corniani, iii. 143. Biogr. Univ., Rucellai.

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III.

said by French writers, that the first book printed in their language is le Jardin de dévotion, by Colard Mansion of Bruges, in 1473. This date has been questioned in England; but it is of the less importance, as we have already seen that Caxton's Recueil des histoires de Troye has the clear priority. Le Roman de Baudouin comte de Flandres, Lyon 1474, seems to be the earliest French book printed in France. In 1476, Les Grands Chroniques de St. Denis, an important and bulky volume, appeared at Paris.

In Eng-
land, by
Caxton.

51. We come now to our own Caxton, who finished a translation into English of his Recueil des histoires de Troye, by order of Margaret duchess of Burgundy, at Cologne, in September 1471. It was probably printed there the next year.* But soon afterwards he came to England with the instruments of his art; and in 1474, his Game of Chess, a slight and short performance, is supposed to have been the first specimen of English typography.† In almost every year from this time to his death in 1483, Caxton continued to publish those volumes which are the delight of our collectors. The earliest of his editions bearing a date in England, is the "Dictes and Sayings,"

* This book at the duke of Roxburgh's famous sale brought 1060*l*.

† The *Expositio Sancti Hieronymi*, of which a copy, in the public library at Cambridge, bears the date of Oxford 1468 on the title-page, is now generally given up. It has been successfully contended by Middleton, and lately by Mr. Singer, that this date should be 1478; the numeral let-

ter x having been casually omitted. Several similar instances occur, in which a pretended early book has not stood the keen eye of criticism: as the *Decor Puellarum*, ascribed to Nicolas Jenson of Venice in 1461, for which we should read 1471; a cosmography of Ptolemy with the date of 1462; a book appearing to have been printed at Tours in 1467, &c.

a translation by Lord Rivers from a Latin compilation, and published in 1477. In a literary history it should be observed, that the Caxton publications are more adapted to the general than the learned reader, and indicate, upon the whole, but a low state of knowledge in England. A Latin translation, however, of Aristotle's ethics was printed at Oxford in 1479.

CHAP.
III.

52. The first book printed in Spain was on the very subject we might expect to precede all others, the Conception of the Virgin. It should be a very curious volume, being a poetical contest on that sublime theme by thirty-six poets, four of whom had written in Spanish, one in Italian, and the rest in Provençal or Valencian. It appeared at Valencia in 1474. A little book on grammar followed in 1475, and Sallust was printed the same year. In that year printing was also introduced at Barcelona and Saragossa, in 1476 at Seville, in 1480 at Salamanca and Burgos.

In Spain.

53. A translation of the Bible by Malerbi, a Venetian, was published in 1471, and two other editions of that, or a different version, the same year. Eleven editions are enumerated by Panzer in the fifteenth century. The German translation has already been mentioned; it was several times reprinted in this decad; one in Dutch appeared in 1477, one in the Valencian language, at that city, in 1478*; the New Testament was printed

Translations
of
Scripture.

* This edition was suppressed or destroyed; no copy is known to exist; but there is preserved a final leaf containing the names of the translator and printer. M'Crie's Reformation in Spain, p. 192. Andrés says (xix. 154.), that this translation was made early in the fifteenth century, with the approbation of divines.

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III.

in Bohemian, 1475, and in French, 1477; the earliest French translation of the Old Testament seems to be about the same date. The reader will of course understand, that all these translations were made from the Vulgate Latin. It may naturally seem remarkable, that not only at this period, but down to the Reformation, no attempt was made to render any part of the Scriptures public in English. But, in fact, the ground was thought too dangerous by those in power. The translation of Wicliffe had taught the people some comparisons between the worldly condition of the first preachers of Christianity and their successors, as well as some other contrasts, which it was more expedient to avoid. Long before the invention of printing it was enacted, in 1408, by a constitution of archbishop Arundel in convocation, that no one should thereafter "translate any text of Holy Scripture into English, by way of a book, or little book or tract; and that no book should be read that was composed lately in the time of John Wicliffe, or since his death." Scarcely any of Caxton's publications are of a religious nature.

Revival of
literature
in Spain.

54. It would have been strange if Spain, placed on the genial shores of the Mediterranean, and intimately connected through the Aragonese kings with Italy, had not received some light from that which began to shine so brightly. Her progress, however, in letters was but slow. Not but that several individuals are named by compilers of literary biography in the first part of the fifteenth century, as well as earlier, who are reputed to have possessed a knowledge of languages, and to

have stood at least far above their contemporaries. Alfonsus Tostatus passes for the most considerable; his writings are chiefly theological, but Andrès praises his commentary on the Chronicle of Eusebius, at least as a bold essay.* He contends that learning was not deficient in Spain during the fifteenth century, though admitting that the rapid improvements made at its close, and about the beginning of the next age, were due to Lebrixa's public instructions at Seville and Salamanca. Several translations were made from Latin authors into Spanish, which, however, is not of itself any great proof of Peninsular learning. The men to whom Spain chiefly owes the advancement of useful learning, and who should not be defrauded of their glory, were Arias Barbosa, a scholar of Politian, and the more renowned, though not more learned or more early propagator of Grecian literature, Antonio of Lebrixa, whose name was latinised into Nebrissensis, by which he is commonly known. Of Arias, who unaccountably has no place in the *Biographie Universelle*, Nicolas Antonio gives a very high character.† He taught the Greek language at Salamanca probably about this time. But his writings are not at all numerous.

* ix. 151.

† In quo Antonium Nebrissensem socium habuit, qui tamen quicquid usquam Græcarum literarum apud Hispanos esset, ab uno Aria emanasse in præfatione suarum Introductionum Grammaticarum ingenue affirmavit. His duobus amplissimum illud gymnasium, indeque Hispania tota debet barbariei, quæ longo apud nos bel-

lorum dominatu in immensum creverat, extirpationem, bonarumque omnium disciplinarum divitias. Quas Arias noster ex antiquitatis penu per vicennium integrum auditoribus suis larga et locuplete vena communicavit, in poetica facultate Græcanicaque doctrina Nebrissense melior, a quo tamen in varia multiplicique doctrina superabatur. Bibl. Vetus.

CHAP.
III.

Character
of Lebrixa.

For Lebrixa, instead of compiling from other sources, I shall transcribe what Dr. M'Crie has said with his usual perspicuous brevity.

55. "Lebrixa, usually styled Nebrissensis, became to Spain what Valla was to Italy, Erasmus to Germany, or Budæus to France. After a residence of ten years in Italy, during which he had stored his mind with various kinds of knowledge, he returned home, in 1473, by the advice of the younger Philelphus and Hermolaus Barbarus, with the view of promoting classical literature in his native country. Hitherto the revival of letters in Spain was confined to a few inquisitive individuals, and had not reached the schools and universities, whose teachers continued to teach a barbarous jargon under the name of Latin, into which they initiated the youth by means of a rude system of grammar, rendered unintelligible, in some instances, by a preposterous intermixture of the most abstruse questions in metaphysics. By the lectures which he read in the universities of Seville, Salamanca, and Alcala, and by the institutes which he published on Castilian, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew grammar, Lebrixa contributed in a wonderful degree to expel barbarism from the seats of education, and to diffuse a taste for elegant and useful studies among his countrymen. His improvements were warmly opposed by the monks, who had engrossed the art of teaching, and who, unable to bear the light themselves, wished to prevent all others from seeing it; but, enjoying the support of persons of high authority, he disregarded their selfish and ignorant outcries.

Lebrixa continued to an advanced age to support the literary reputation of his native country." * CHAP. III.

56. This was the brilliant æra of Florence, under the supremacy of Lorenzo de' Medici. The reader is probably well acquainted with this eminent character, by means of a work of extensive and merited reputation. The Laurentian library, still consisting wholly of manuscripts, though formed by Cosmo, and enlarged by his son Pietro, owed not only its name, but an ample increase of its treasures, to Lorenzo, who swept the monasteries of Greece through his learned agent, John Lascaris. With that true love of letters which scorns the monopolising spirit of possession, Lorenzo permitted his manuscripts to be freely copied for the use of other parts of Europe.

Library of Lorenzo.

57. It was an important labour of the learned at Florence to correct, as well as elucidate, the text of their manuscripts, written generally by ignorant and careless monks, or trading copyists (though the latter probably had not much concern with ancient writers), and become almost wholly unintelligible through the blunders of these transcribers.† Landino, Merula, Calderino, and Politian were the most indefatigable in this line of criticism during the age of Lorenzo. Before the use of printing fixed the text of a whole edition — one of the most important of its consequences — the critical amendments of these scholars could

Classics corrected and explained.

* M'Crie's Hist. of Reformation in Spain, p. 61. It is probable that Lebrixa's exertions were not very effectual in the present decennium, nor were perhaps in

the next, but his Institutiones Grammaticæ, a very scarce book, were printed at Seville in 1481.

† Meiners, Vergleich. der sitten. iii. 108. Heeren, p. 293.

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III.

only be made useful through their oral lectures. And these appear frequently to have been the foundation of the valuable, though rather prolix, commentaries we find in the old editions. Thus those of Landino accompany many editions of Horace and Virgil, forming, in some measure, the basis of all interpretative annotations on those poets. Landino in these seldom touches on verbal criticism; but his explanations display a considerable reach of knowledge. They are founded, as Heeren is convinced, on his lectures, and consequently give us some notion of the tone of instruction. In explaining the poets, two methods were pursued, the grammatical and the moral, the latter of which consisted in resolving the whole sense into allegory. Dante had given credit to a doctrine, orthodox in this age, and long afterwards, that every great poem must have a hidden meaning. *

Character
of Lorenzo.

58. The notes of Calderino, a scholar of high fame, but infected with the common vice of arrogance, are found with those of Landino in the early editions of Virgil and Horace. Regio commented upon Ovid, Omnibonus Leonicens upon Lucan, both these upon Quintilian, many upon Cicero. † It may be observed, for the sake of chronological exactness, that these labours are by no means confined, even principally, to this decennial period. They are mentioned in connexion with the name of Lorenzo de' Medici, whose influence over literature extended from 1470 to his

* Heeren, pp. 241. 287.

† Id. 297.

death in 1492. Nor was mere philology the sole, or the leading, pursuit to which so truly noble a mind accorded its encouragement. He sought in ancient learning something more elevated than the narrow, though necessary, researches of criticism. In a villa overhanging the towers of Florence, on the steep slope of that lofty hill crowned by the mother city, the ancient Fiesole, in gardens which Tully might have envied, with Ficino, Landino, and Politian at his side, he delighted his hours of leisure with the beautiful visions of Platonic philosophy, for which the summer stillness of an Italian sky appears the most congenial accompaniment.

59. Never could the sympathies of the soul with outward nature be more finely touched; never could more striking suggestions be presented to the philosopher and the statesman. Florence lay beneath them; not with all the magnificence that the later Medici have given her, but, thanks to the piety of former times, presenting almost as varied an outline to the sky. One man, the wonder of Cosmo's age, Brunelleschi, had crowned the beautiful city with the vast dome of its cathedral; a structure unthought of in Italy before, and rarely since surpassed. It seemed, amidst clustering towers of inferior churches, an emblem of the Catholic hierarchy under its supreme head; like Rome itself, imposing, unbroken, unchangeable, radiating in equal expansion to every part of the earth, and directing its convergent curves to heaven. Round this were numbered, at unequal heights, the Baptistery, with its gates worthy of Paradise; the tall and richly decorated belfry of

Prospect
from his
villa at
Fiesole.

**CHAP.
III.**

Giotto; the church of the Carmine, with the frescos of Masaccio; those of Santa Maria Novella, beautiful as a bride, of Santa Croce, second only in magnificence to the cathedral, and of St. Mark; the San Spirito, another great monument of the genius of Brunelleschi; the numerous convents that rose within the walls of Florence, or were scattered immediately about them. From these the eye might turn to the trophies of a republican government that was rapidly giving way before the citizen-prince who now surveyed them; the Palazzo Vecchio, in which the signiory of Florence held their councils, raised by the Guef aristocracy, the exclusive, but not tyrannous faction that long swayed the city; or the new and unfinished palace which Brunelleschi had designed for one of the Pitti family, before they fell, as others had already done, in the fruitless struggle against the house of Medici; itself destined to become the abode of the victorious race, and to perpetuate, by retaining its name, the revolutions that had raised them to power.

60. The prospect, from an elevation, of a great city in its silence, is one of the most impressive, as well as beautiful, we ever behold. But far more must it have brought home thoughts of seriousness to the mind of one who, by the force of events, and the generous ambition of his family, and his own, was involved in the dangerous necessity of governing without the right, and, as far as might be, without the semblance of power; one who knew the vindictive and unscrupulous hostility which, at home and abroad, he had to encounter.

If thoughts like these could bring a cloud over the brow of Lorenzo, unfit for the object he sought in that retreat, he might restore its serenity by other scenes which his garden commanded. Mountains bright with various hues, and clothed with wood, bounded the horizon, and, on most sides, at no great distance; but embosomed in these were other villas and domains of his own; while the level country bore witness to his agricultural improvements, the classic diversion of a statesman's cares. The same curious spirit which led him to fill his garden at Careggi with exotic flowers of the east, the first instance of a botanical collection in Europe, had introduced a new animal from the same regions. Herds of buffaloes, since naturalised in Italy, whose dingy hide, bent neck, curved horns, and lowering aspect, contrasted with the greyish hue and full mild eye of the Tuscan oxen, pastured in the valley, down which the yellow Arno steals silently through its long reaches to the sea. *

* *Taliâ Fæsuleo lentus meditar in antro,
Rure suburbano Medicum, quæ
mons sacer urbem
Mæoniam, longique volumina
despicit Arni:
Quæ bonus hospitium felix placidamque quietem
Indulget Laurens.*

Politiani Rusticus.

And let us from the top of
Fiesole,
Whence Galileo's glass by night
observed
The phases of the moon, look
round below
On Arno's vale, where the dove-
coloured steer

Is ploughing up and down
among the vines,
While many a careless note is
sung aloud,
Filling the air with sweetness—
and on thee,
Beautiful Florence, all within
thy walls,
Thy groves and gardens, pinna-
cles and towers,
Drawn to our feet.

It is hardly necessary to say that these lines are taken from my friend Mr. Rogers's Italy, a poem full of moral and descriptive sweetness, and written in the chastened tone of fine taste. With respect to the buffaloes, I have no other au-

CHAP.
III.Platonic
academy.

61. The Platonic academy, which Cosmo had planned, came to maturity under Lorenzo. The academicians were divided into three classes:— the patrons (*mecenati*), including the Medici; the hearers (*ascoltatori*, probably from the Greek word *ἀκροῦνται*); and the novices, or disciples, formed of young aspirants to philosophy. Ficino presided over the whole. Their great festival was the 13th of November, being the anniversary of the birth and death of Plato. Much of absurd mysticism, much of frivolous and mischievous superstition, was mingled with their speculations. *

Disputa-
tiones Ca-
maldu-
lenses of
Landino.

62. The *Disputationes Camaldulenses* of Landino were published during this period, though, perhaps, written a little sooner. They belong to a class prominent in the literature of Italy in this and the succeeding century; disquisitions on philosophy in the form of dialogue, with more solicitude to present a graceful delineation of virtue, and to kindle a generous sympathy for moral beauty, than to explore the labyrinths of theory, or even to lay down clear and distinct principles of ethics. The writings of Plato and Cicero, in this manner, had shown a track, in which their idolaters, with distant and hesitating steps, and more of

thority than these lines of Politian, in his poem of *Ambra*, on the farm of Lorenzo at Poggio Cajano.

Atque aliud nigris missum, quis
credat? ab Indis,
Ruminat insuetas armentum
discolor herbas.

But I must own, that Buffon
tells us, though without quoting

any authority, that the buffalo was introduced into Italy as early as the seventh century. I did not take the trouble of consulting Aldrovandus, who would perhaps have confirmed him — especially as I have a better opinion of my readers than to suppose they would care about the matter.

* Roscoe, Corniani.

reverence than emulation, delighted to tread. These Disputations of Landino, in which, according to the beautiful patterns of ancient dialogue, the most honoured names of the age appear — Lorenzo and his brother Julian; Alberti, whose almost universal genius is now best known by his architecture; Ficino, and Landino himself — turn upon a comparison between the active and contemplative life of man, to the latter of which it seems designed to give the advantage, and are saturated with the thoughtful spirit of Platonism. *

63. Landino was not, by any means, the first who had tried the theories of ancient philosophy through the feigned warfare of dialogue. Valla, intrepid and fond of paradox, had vindicated the Epicurean ethics from the calumnious or exaggerated censure frequently thrown upon them, contrasting the true methods by which pleasure should be sought with the gross notions of the vulgar. Several other writings of the same description, either in dialogue or regular dissertation, belong to the fifteenth century, though not always published so early, such as Franciscus Barbarus *de re uxoria* †, Platina *de falso et vero bono*, the Vita

Philosophical dialogues.

* Corniani and Roscoe have given this account of the *Disputationes Camaldulenses*. I have no direct acquaintance with the book.

† This, which has been already mentioned, may be considered as much the earliest, having been published about 1417. Shepherd's Poggio, c. 3. Barbaro was a noble Venetian, who had learned Latin under Gasparin of Barziza. He was afterwards chiefly employed

in public life. This treatise *de re uxoria*, of which some account may be found in Corniani (ii. 137.) made a considerable impression at that early time. Corniani thinks it the only work of moral philosophy in the fifteenth century, which is not a servile copy of some ancient system. The more celebrated Hermolaus was grandson of this Francis Barbarus.

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III.

Civile of Palmieri, the moral treatises of Poggio, Alberti, Pontano, and Matteo Bosso, concerning some of which little more than the names are to be learned from literary history, and which it would not, perhaps, be worth while to mention, except as collectively indicating a predilection for this style, which the Italians long continued to display. *

Paulus
Cortesi-
us.

64. Some of these related to general criticism, or to that of single authors. My knowledge of them is chiefly limited to the dialogue of Paulus Cortesius de hominibus doctis, written, I conceive, about 1490; no unsuccessful imitation of Cicero de claris oratoribus, from which indeed modern Latin writers have always been accustomed to collect the discriminating phrases of criticism. Cortesius, who was young at the time of writing this dialogue, uses an elegant, if not always a correct Latinity; characterising agreeably, and with apparent taste, the authors of the fifteenth century. It may be read in conjunction with the Ciceronianus of Erasmus, who, with no knowledge, perhaps, of Cortesius, has gone over the same ground in rather inferior language.

Schools in
Germany.

65. It was about the beginning of this decad that a few Germans and Netherlanders, trained in the college of Deventer, or that of ZwoU, or of St. Edward's near Groningen, were roused to acquire that extensive knowledge of the ancient

* Corniani is much fuller than Tiraboschi on these treatises. Roscoe seems to have read the ethical writings of Matteo Bosso

(Life of Leo X., c. xx.) but hardly adverts to any of the rest I have named. Some of them are very scarce.

languages which Italy as yet exclusively possessed. Their names should never be omitted in any remembrance of the revival of letters; for great was their influence upon the subsequent times. Wessel of Groningen, one of those who contributed most steadily towards the purification of religion, and to whom the Greek and Hebrew languages are said, but probably on no solid grounds, to have been known, may be reckoned in this class. But others were more directly engaged in the advancement of literature. Three schools, from which issued the most conspicuous ornaments of the next generation, rose under masters, learned for that time, and zealous in the good cause of instruction. Alexander Hegius became, about 1475, rector of that at Deventer, where Erasmus received his early education.* Hegius was not wholly ignorant of Greek, and imparted the rudiments of it to his illustrious pupil. I am inclined to ascribe the publication of a very rare and curious book, the first endeavour to print Greek on this side of the Alps,

* Heeren, p. 149., says that Hegius began to preside over the school of Deventer in 1480; but I think the date in the text is more probable, as Erasmus left it at the age of fourteen, and was certainly born in 1465. Though Hegius is said to have known but little Greek, I find in Panzer the title of a book by him, printed at Deventer in 1501, *de Utilitate Linguae Græcæ*.

The life of Hegius in Melchior Adam is interesting. *Primus hic in Belgio literas excitavit*, says Revius, in *Daventria Illustrata*, p. 130. *Mihi*, says Erasmus, ad-

modum adhuc puero contigit uti præceptore hujus discipulo Alexandro Hegio Westphalo, qui ludum aliquando celebrem oppidi Daven- triensis moderabatur, in quo nos olim admodum pueri utriusque linguae prima didicimus elementa. Adag. Chil. i. cent. iv. 39. In another place he says of Hegius; ne hic quidem Græcarum literarum omnino ignarus est. Epist. 411. in Appendice. Erasmus left Deventer at the age of fourteen; consequently in 1479 or 1480, as he tells us in an epistle, dated 17th Apr. 1519.

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to no other person than Hegius. * Louis Dringeborg founded, not perhaps before 1480, a still more

* This very rare book, unnoticed by most bibliographers, is of some importance in the history of literature. It is a small quarto tract, entitled, *Conjugationes verborum Græcæ, Daventriæ noviter extremo labore collectæ et impressæ*. No date or printer's name appears. A copy is in the British Museum, and another in Lord Spencer's library. It contains nothing but the word *τυπτω* in all its voices and tenses, with Latin explanations in Gothic letters. The Greek types are very rude, and the characters sometimes misplaced. It must, I should presume, seem probable to every one who considers this book, that it is of the fifteenth century, and consequently older than any known Greek on this side of the Alps; which of itself should render it interesting in the eyes of bibliographers and of every one else. But fully disclaiming all such acquaintance with the technical science of typographical antiquity, as to venture any judgment founded on the appearance of a particular book, or on a comparison of it with others, I would, on other grounds, suggest the probability that this little attempt at Greek grammar issued from the Deventer press about 1480. It appears clear that whoever "collected with extreme labour" these forms of the verb *τυπτω*, had never been possessed of a Greek and Latin grammar. For would it not be absurd to use such expressions about a simple transcription? Besides which, the word is not only given in an arrangement different from any I have ever seen, but with a non-existent form of participle, *τετιψαμενος* for *τιψαμενος*, which could not surely have been found in

any prior grammar. Now the grammar of Lascaris was published with a Latin translation by Craston in 1480. It is indeed highly probable that this book would not reach Deventer immediately after its impression; but it does seem as if there could not long have been any extreme difficulty in obtaining a correct synopsis of the verb *τυπτω*.

We have seen that Erasmus, about 1477, acquired a very slight tincture of Greek under Alexander Hegius at Deventer. And here, as he tells us, he saw Agricola, returning probably from Italy to Groningen. *Quem mihi puero, ferme duodecim annos nato, Daventriæ videre contigit, nec aliud contigit.* (Jortin, ii. 416.) No one could be so likely as Hegius to attempt a Greek grammar; nor do we find that his successors in that college were men as distinguished for learning as himself. But in fact at a later time it could not have been so extraordinarily imperfect. We might perhaps conjecture that he took down these Greek tenses from the mouth of Agricola, since we must presume oral communication rather than the use of books. Agricola, repeating from memory, and not thoroughly conversant with the language, might have given the false tense *τετιψαμενος*. The tract was probably printed by Pafroet, some of whose editions bear as early a date as 1477. It has long been extremely scarce; for Revius does not include it in the list of Pafroet's publications he has given in *Daventria Illustrata*, nor will it be found in Panzer. Beloe was the first to mention it in his *Anecdotes of Scarce Books*; and it is referred by him to the fifteenth century; but apparently without his being aware

distinguished seminary at Schelstadt in Alsace. Here the luminaries of Germany in a more advanced stage of learning, Conrad Celtes, Bebel, Rhenanus, Wimpheling, Pirckheimer, Simler, are said to have imbibed their knowledge.* The third school was at Munster; and over this Rodolph Langius presided, a man not any way inferior to the other two, and of more reputation as a Latin writer, especially as a poet. The school of Munster did not come under the care of Langius till 1483, or perhaps rather later; and his strenuous exertions in the cause of useful and polite literature against monkish barbarians extended into the next century. But his life was long: the first, or nearly such, to awaken his countrymen, he was permitted to behold the full establishment of learning, and to exult in the dawn of the Reform-

there was any thing remarkable in that antiquity. Dr. Dibdin, in *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, has given a fuller account; and from him Brunet has inserted it in the *Manuel du Libraire*. Neither Beloe nor Dibdin seems to have known that there is a copy in the Museum; they speak only of that belonging to Lord Spencer.

If it were true that Reuchlin, during his residence at Orleans, had published, as well as compiled, a Greek grammar, we should not need to have recourse to the hypothesis of this note, in order to give the antiquity of the present decalogue to Greek typography. Such a grammar is asserted by Meiners, in his *Life of Reuchlin*, to have been printed at Poitiers; and Eichhorn positively says, without reference to the place of publication, that Reuchlin was the first German

who published a Greek grammar. (*Gesch. der Litt.* iii. 275.) Meiners, however, in a subsequent volume (iii. 10.,) retracts this assertion, and says it has been proved that the Greek grammar of Reuchlin was never printed. Yet I find in the *Bibliotheca Universalis* of Gesner: Joh. Capnio [Reuchlin] scripsit de diversitate quatuor idiomatum Græcæ linguæ lib. i. No such book appears in the list of Reuchlin's works in Nicéron, vol. xxv., nor in any of the bibliographies. If it ever existed, we may place it with more probability at the very close of this century, or at the beginning of the next.

* Eichhorn, iii. 231. Meiners, ii. 369. Eichhorn carelessly follows a bad authority in counting Reuchlin among these pupils of the Schelstadt school.

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ation. In company with a young man of rank, and equal zeal, Maurice count of Spiegelberg, who himself became the provost of a school at Emmenrich, Langius visited Italy, and, as Meiners supposes, though, I think, upon uncertain grounds, before 1460. But not long afterwards, a more distinguished person than any we have mentioned, Rodolph Agricola of Groningen, sought in that more genial land the taste and correctness which no Cisalpine nation could supply. Agricola passed several years of this decad in Italy. We shall find the effects of his example in the next. *

Study of
Greek at
Paris.

66. Meantime a slight impulse seems to have been given to the university of Paris by the lessons of George Tifernas ; for from some disciples of his Reuchlin, a young German of great talents and celebrity, acquired, probably about the year 1470, the first elements of the Greek language. This knowledge he improved by the lessons of a native Greek, Andronicus Cartoblacas, at Basle. In that city he had the good fortune, rare on this side of the Alps, to find a collection of Greek manuscripts, left there at the time of the council by a cardinal Nicolas of Ragusa. By the advice of Cartoblacas, he taught Greek himself at Basle. After the lapse of some years, Reuchlin went again to Paris, and found a new teacher, George Hermonymus of Sparta, who had settled there about 1472. From Paris he removed to Orleans and Poitiers ; he is said to have taught,

* See Meiners, vol. ii., Eichhorn, and Heeren, for the revival of learning in Germany ; or something may be found in Brucker.

perhaps not the Greek language, in the former city, and to have written a Greek grammar in the second. It seems however now to be ascertained, that this grammar was never printed. *

Controversy
of Realists
and Nomi-
nalists.

67. The classical literature which delighted Reuchlin and Agricola was disregarded as frivolous by the wise of that day in the university of Paris; but they were much more keenly opposed to innovation and heterodoxy in their own peculiar line, the scholastic metaphysics. Most have heard of the long controversies between the Realists and Nominalists concerning the nature of universals, or the genera and species of things. The first, with Plato and Aristotle, maintained their objective or external reality; either, as it was called, *ante rem*, as eternal archetypes in the Divine Intelligence, or *in re*, as forms inherent in matter; the second, with Zeno, gave them only a subjective existence as ideas conceived by the mind, and have hence in later times acquired the name of Conceptualists.† Roscelin, the first of the modern Nominalists, went farther than this, and denied, as Hobbes and Berkeley, with many others, have since done, all universality except to words and propositions. Abelard, who inveighs against the doctrine of Roscelin as false logic and false theology, and endeavours to confound it with the denial of any

* Meiners, i. 46. Besides Meiners, Brucker, iv. 358., as well as Heeren, have given pretty full accounts of Reuchlin; and a good life of him will be found in the 25th volume of Nicéron: but the *Epistolæ ad Reuchlinum* throw still more light

on the man and his contemporaries.

† I am chiefly indebted for the facts in the following paragraphs to a dissertation by Meiners, in the transactions of the Gottingen Academy, vol. xii.

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Scotus.

objective reality even in singular things *, may be esteemed the restorer of the Conceptualist school. We do not know his doctrines, however, by his own writings, but by the testimony of John of Salisbury, who seems not well to have understood the subject. The words Realist and Nominalist came into use about the end of the twelfth century. But in the next, the latter party by degrees disappeared; and the great schoolmen, Aquinas and Scotus, in whatever else they might disagree, were united on the Realist side. On the fourteenth century William Ockham revived the opposite hypothesis with considerable success. Scotus and his disciples were the great maintainers of Realism. If there were no substantial forms, he argued, that is, nothing real, which determines the mode of being in each individual, men and brutes would be of the same substance; for they do not differ as to matter, nor can extrinsic accidents make a substantive difference. There must be a substantial form of a horse, another of a lion, another of a man. He seems to have held the immateriality of the soul, that is, the substantial form of man. But no other form, he maintained, can exist without matter naturally, though it may supernaturally by the power of God. Socrates and Plato agree more than Socrates and an ass. They have, therefore, something in common, which an

* Hic sicut pseudo-dialecticus, ita pseudo-christianus—ut eo loco quo dicitur Dominus partem piscis assi comedisse, partem hujus vocis, quæ est piscis assi, non partem rei intelligere cogatur. Meiners, p. 27. This may serve to show the cavil-

ling tone of scholastic disputes; and Meiners may well say; Quicquid Roscelinus peccavit, non adeo tamen insanisse pronuntiandum est, ut Abelardus illum fecisse invidiose fingere sustinuit.

ass has not. But this is not numerically the same ; it must, therefore, be something universal, namely, human nature.*

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68. These reasonings, which are surely no unfavourable specimen of the subtle philosopher, were met by Ockham with others which sometimes appear more refined and obscure. He confined reality to objective things, denying it to the host of abstract entities brought forward by Scotus. He defines a universal to be "a particular intention (meaning probably idea or conception) of the mind itself, capable of being predicated of many things, not for what it properly is itself, but for what those things are ; so that, in so far as it has this capacity, it is called universal, but inasmuch as it is one form really existing in the mind, it is called singular."† I have not examined the writings of Ockham, and am unable to determine whether his Nominalism extends beyond that of Berkeley or Stewart, which is generally asserted by the modern inquirers into scholastic philosophy ; that is, whether it amounts to Conceptualism ; the foregoing definition, as far as I can judge, might have been given by them.

Ockham.

69. The later Nominalists of the scholastic period, Buridan, Biel, and several others mentioned by the historians of philosophy, took all their reasonings from the storehouse of Ockham.

Nominalists in
university
of Paris.

* Id. p. 39.

† Unam intentionem singularem ipsius animæ, natam prædicari de pluribus, non pro se, sed pro ipsis rebus ; ita quod per hoc, quod ipsa nata est prædicari de pluribus, non

pro se sed pro illis pluribus, illa dicitur universalis ; propter hoc autem, quod est una forma existens realiter in intellectu, dicitur singulare. p. 42.

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His doctrine was prohibited at Paris by pope John XXII., whose theological opinions, as well as secular encroachments, he had opposed. All masters of arts were bound by oath never to teach Ockhamism. But after the pope's death the university condemned a tenet of the Realists, that many truths are eternal, which are not God; and went so far towards the Nominalist theory, as to determine that our knowledge of things is through the medium of words.* Peter d'Ailly, Gerson, and other principal men of their age were Nominalists; the sect was very powerful in Germany, and may be considered, on the whole, as prevalent in this century. The Realists, however, by some management gained the ear of Louis XI., who by an ordinance in 1473, explicitly approves the doctrines of the great Realist philosophers, condemns that of Ockham and his disciples, and forbids it to be taught, enjoining the books of the Nominalists to be locked up from public perusal, and all present as well as future graduates in the university to swear to the observation of this ordinance. The prohibition, nevertheless, was repealed in 1481; the guilty books set free from their chains, and the hypothesis of the Nominalists virtually permitted to be held, amidst the acclamations of the university, and especially one of its four nations, that of Germany. Some of their party had, during this persecution, taken refuge in that empire and in England, both friendly to their cause; and this metaphysical contention of the fifteenth century sug-

* Id. p. 45., *scientiam habemus de rebus, sed mediantibus terminis.*

gests and typifies the great religious convulsion of the next. The weight of ability, during this later and less flourishing period of scholastic philosophy, was on the Nominalist side ; and though the political circumstances to which we have alluded were not immediately connected with their principle, this metaphysical sect facilitated in some measure the success of the Reformation.

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70. We should still look in vain to England for either learning or native genius. The reign of Edward IV. may be reckoned one of the lowest points in our literary annals. The universities had fallen in reputation and in frequency of students ; where there had been thousands, according to Wood, there was not now one ; which must be understood as an hyperbolical way of speaking. But the decline of the universities, frequented as they had been by indigent vagabonds withdrawn from useful labour, and wretched as their pretended instruction had been, was so far from an evil in itself, that it left clear the path for the approaching introduction of real learning. Several colleges were about this time founded at Oxford and Cambridge, which, in the design of their munificent founders, were to become, as they have done, the instruments of a better discipline than the barbarous schoolmen afforded. We have already observed, that England was like seed fermenting in the ground through the fifteenth century. The language was becoming more vigorous, and more capable of giving utterance to good thoughts, as some translations from Caxton's press show, such as the Dicts of Philosophers, by Lord Rivers. And

Low state
of learning
in England.

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perhaps the best exercise for a school-boy people is that of school-boys. The poetry of two Scotsmen, Henryson and Mercer, which is not without merit, may be nearly referred to the present decad.*

Mathe-
matics.

71. The progress of mathematical science was regular, though not rapid. We might have mentioned before the gnomon erected by Toscanelli in the cathedral at Florence, which is referred to 1468 ; a work, it has been said, which, considering the times, has done as much honour to his genius as that so much renowned at Bologna to Cassini.†

Regiomon-
tanus.

The greatest mathematician of the fifteenth century, Muller, or Regiomontanus, a native of Königsberg, or Königshoven, a small town in Franconia, whence he derived his latinised appellation, died prematurely, like his master Purbach, in 1476. He had begun at the age of fifteen to assist the latter in astronomical observations ; and having, after Purbach's death, acquired a knowledge of Greek in Italy, and devoted himself to the ancient geometers, after some years spent with

* Campbell's *Specimens of British Poets*, vol. i.

† This gnomon is by much the loftiest in Europe. It would be no slight addition to the glory of Toscanelli if we should suppose him to have suggested the discovery of a passage westward to the Indies in a letter to Columbus, as his article in the *Biographie Universelle* seems to imply. But the more accurate expressions of Tiraboschi, referring to the correspondence between these great men, leave Columbus in possession of the original idea, at least con-

currently with the Florentine astronomer, though the latter gave him strong encouragement to persevere in his undertaking. Toscanelli, however, had, on the authority of Marco Polo, imbibed an exaggerated notion of the distance eastward to China ; and consequently believed, as Columbus himself did, that the voyage by the west to that country would be far shorter than, if the continent of America did not intervene, it could have been. Tiraboschi, vi. 189. 207. Roscoe's *Leo X.*, ch. 20.

distinction in that country, and at the court of Mathias Corvinus, he settled finally at Nuremberg; where a rich citizen, Bernard Walther, both supplied the means of accurate observations, and became the associate of his labours.* Regiomontanus died at Rome, whither he had been called to assist in rectifying the calendar. Several of his works were printed in this decad, and among others his ephemerides, or calculations of the places of the sun and moon, for the ensuing thirty years; the best, though not strictly the first, that had been made in Europe.† His more extensive productions did not appear till afterwards; and the treatise on triangles, the most celebrated, not till 1533. The solution of the more difficult cases, both in plane and spherical trigonometry, is found in this work; and with the exception of what the science owes to Napier, it may be said, that it advanced little for more than two centuries after the age of Regiomontanus.‡ Purbach had computed a table of sines to a radius of 600,000 parts. Regiomontanus, ignorant, as has been thought, which appears very strange, of his master's labours, calculated them to 6,000,000 parts. But per-

* Walther was more than a patron of science, honourable as that name was. He made astronomical observations, worthy of esteem relatively to the age. Montucla, i. 545. It is to be regretted that Walther should have diminished the credit due to his name by withholding from the public the manuscripts of Regiomontanus, which he purchased after the latter's death; so that some were lost by the negligence of his own

heirs, and the rest remained unpublished till 1533.

† Gassendi, *Vita Regiomontani*. He speaks of them himself, as quas vulgo vocant almanach; and Gassendi says, that some were extant in manuscript at Paris, from 1442 to 1472. Those of Regiomontanus contained eclipses, and other matters not in former almanacs.

‡ Hutton's *Logarithms*, Introduction, p. 3.

CHAP. III. ceiving the advantages of a decimal scale, he has given a second table, wherein the ratio of the sines is computed to a radius of 10,000,000 parts, or, as we should say, taking the latter as unity, to seven places of decimals. He subjoined what he calls Canon Fæcundus, or a table of tangents, calculating them, however, only for entire degrees to a radius of 100,000 parts.* It has been said, that Regiomontanus was inclined to the theory of the earth's motion, which indeed Nicolas Cusanus had already espoused.

Arts of delineation.

72. Though the arts of delineation do not properly come within the scope of this volume, yet so far as they are directly instrumental to science, they ought not to pass unregarded. Without the tool that presents figures to the eye, not the press itself could have diffused an adequate knowledge either of anatomy or of natural history. As figures cut in wooden blocks gave the first idea of letter-printing, and were for some time associated with it, an obvious invention, when the latter art became improved, was to arrange such blocks together with types in the same page. We find accordingly, about this time, many books adorned or illustrated in this manner; generally with representations of saints, or other ornamental delineations not of much importance; but in a few instances with figures of plants and animals, or of human anatomy. The *Dyalogus creaturarum moralizatus*, of which the first edition was published at Gouda, 1480, seems to be nearly, if not

* Kästner, i. 557.

altogether, the earliest of these. It contains a series of fables with rude wood-cuts, in little more than outline. A second edition, printed at Antwerp in 1486, repeats the same cuts, with the addition of one representing a church, which is really elaborate.*

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73. The art of engraving figures on plates of copper was nearly coëval with that of printing, and is due either to Thomas Finiguerra about 1460, or to some German about the same time. It was not a difficult step to apply this invention to the representation of geographical maps; and this we owe to Arnold Buckinck, an associate of the printer Sweynheim. His edition of Ptolemy's geography appeared at Rome in 1478. These maps are traced from those of Agathodæmon in the fifth century; and it has been thought that Buckinck profited by the hints of Donis, a German monk, who himself gave two editions of Ptolemy not long afterwards at Ulm.† The fifteenth century had already witnessed an increasing attention to geographical delineations. The libraries of Italy contain several unpublished maps, of which that by Fra Mauro, a monk of the order of Camaldoli, in the convent of Murano, near Venice,

Maps.

Geography.

* Both these editions are in the British Museum. In the same library is a copy of the exceedingly scarce work, *Ortus Sanitatis*. Mogunt. 1491. The colophon, which may be read in De Bure (*Sciences*, No. 1554.), takes much credit for the carefulness of the delineations. The wooden cuts of the plants, especially, are as good as we usually find in the sixteenth century; the form of the leaves and character of the plant are generally well preserved. The animals are also tolerably figured, though with many exceptions, and, on the whole, fall short of the plants. The work itself is a compilation from the old naturalists, arranged alphabetically.

† Biogr. Univ. Buckinck, Donis.

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is the most celebrated. It is still preserved there, and is said to attest the cosmographical science of its delineator, such as he could derive from Ptolemy, and from the astronomy of his own age.* Two causes, besides the increase of commerce, and the gradual accumulation of knowledge, had principally turned the thoughts of many towards the figure of the earth on which they trod. Two translations, one of them by Emanuel Chrysoloras, had been made early in the century, from the cosmography of Ptolemy; and from his maps the geographers of Italy had learned the use of parallels and meridians, which might a little, though inadequately, restrain their arbitrary admeasurements of different countries.† But the real discoveries of the Portuguese on the coast of Africa, under the patronage of Don Henry, were of far greater importance in stimulating and directing enterprise. In the academy founded by that illustrious prince, nautical charts were first delineated in a method more useful to the pilot, by projecting the meridians in parallel right lines ‡, instead of curves on the surface of the sphere. This first step in hydrographical science entitles Don Henry to the name of its founder. And though these early maps and charts of the fifteenth century are to us but a chaos of error and confusion, it was on them that the patient eye of Columbus had rested through long hours of meditation, while strenuous hope and unsubdued doubt were struggling in his soul.

* Andrès, ix. 88. Corniani,
iii. 162.

† Andrès, 86.
‡ Id. 83.

SECT. V. 1480—1490.

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Great Progress of Learning in Italy — Italian Poetry — Pulci — Metaphysical Theology — Ficinus — Picus of Mirandola — Learning in Germany — Early European Drama — Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci.

74. THE press of Italy was less occupied with Greek for several years than might have been expected. But the number of scholars was still not sufficient to repay the expenses of impression. The psalter was published in Greek twice at Milan in 1481, once at Venice in 1486. Craston's Lexicon was also once printed, and the grammar of Lascaris several times. The first classical work the printers ventured upon, was Homer's Battle of Frogs and Mice, published at Venice in 1486, or according to some, at Milan in 1485; the priority of the two editions being disputed. But in 1488, under the munificent patronage of Lorenzo, and by the care of Demetrius of Crete, a complete edition of Homer issued from the press of Florence. This splendid work closes our catalogue for the present.*

Greek
printed in
Italy.

75. The first Hebrew book, Jarchi's commentary on the Pentateuch, had been printed by some Jews at Reggio in Calabria, as early as 1475. In this period a press was established at Soncino, where the Pentateuch was published in 1482, the greater prophets in 1486, and the whole Bible in 1488. But this was intended for themselves alone. What little instruction in Hebrew had any where

Hebrew
printed.

* See Maittaire's character of this edition quoted in Roscoe's Leo X., ch. 21.

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hitherto been imparted to Christian scholars, was only oral. The commencement of Hebrew learning, properly so called, was not till about the end of the century, in the Franciscan monasteries of Tübingen and Basle. Their first teacher, however, was an Italian, by name Raimondi.*

Miscel-
lanies of
Politian.

76. To enumerate every publication that might scatter a gleam of light on the progress of letters in Italy, or to mention every scholar who deserves a place in biographical collections, or in an extended history of literature, would crowd these pages with too many names. We must limit ourselves to those best deserving to be had in remembrance. In 1480, according to Meiners, or, as Heeren says, in 1483, Politian was placed in the chair of Greek and Latin eloquence at Florence; a station perhaps the most conspicuous and the most honourable which any scholar could occupy. It is beyond controversy, that he stands at the head of that class in the fifteenth century. The envy of some of his contemporaries attested his superiority. In 1489, he published his once celebrated *Miscellanea*, consisting of one hundred observations illustrating passages of Latin authors, in the desultory manner of Aulus Gellius, which is certainly the easiest, and perhaps the most agreeable method of conveying information. They are sometimes grammatical; but more frequently relate to obscure (at that time) customs or mythological allusions. Greek quotations occur not seldom, and the author's command of classical literature

* Eichhorn, ii. 562.

seems considerable. Thus he explains, for instance, the *crambe repetita* of Juvenal by a proverb mentioned in Suidas, *δὲς κράμβη θάνατος*: *κράμβη* being a kind of cabbage, which, when boiled a second time, was of course not very palatable. This may serve to show the extent of learning which some Italian scholars had reached through the assistance of the manuscripts collected by Lorenzo. It is not improbable that no one in England at that time had heard the name of Suidas. Yet the imperfect knowledge of Greek which these early writers possessed, is shown when they attempt to write it. Politian has some verses in his *Miscellanea*, but very bald, and full of false quantities. This remark we may have occasion to repeat; for it is applicable to much greater names in philology than his.*

77. The *Miscellanies*, Heeren says, were then considered an immortal work; it was deemed an honour to be mentioned in them, and those who missed this made it a matter of complaint. If we look at them now, we are astonished at the different measure of glory in the present age. This book probably sprung out of Politian's lectures. He had cleared up in these some difficult passages, which had led him on to further inquiries. Some of his explanations might probably have arisen out of the walks and rides he was accustomed to take

Their character, by Heeren.

* Meiners has praised Politian's Greek verses, but with very little skill in such matters, p. 214. The compliments he quotes from contemporary Greeks, *non esse tam Atticas Athenas ipsas*, may not

have been very sincere, unless they meant *esse* to be taken in the present tense. These Greeks, besides, knew but little of their metrical language.

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with Lorenzo, who had advised the publication of the Miscellanies. The manner in which these explanations are given, the light, yet solid mode of handling the subjects, and their great variety, give in fact a charm to the Miscellanies of Politian which few antiquarian works possess. Their success is not wonderful. They were fragments, and chosen fragments, from the lectures of the most celebrated teacher of that age, whom many had heard, but still more had wished to hear. Scarcely had a work appeared in the whole fifteenth century, of which so vast expectations had been entertained, and which was received with such curiosity.* The very fault of Politian's style, as it was that of Hermolaus Barbarus, his affected intermixture of obsolete words, for which it is necessary in almost every page of his Miscellanies to consult the dictionary, would, in an age of pedantry, increase the admiration of his readers.†

His version
of He-
rodian.

78. Politian was the first that wrote the Latin language with much elegance; and while every other early translator from the Greek has incurred more or less of censure at the hands of judges whom better learning had made fastidious, it is agreed by them that his Herodian has all the spirit of his original, and frequently excels it.‡ Thus we per-

* Heeren, p. 263. Meiners, *Lebensbeschreibungen*, &c. has written the life of Politian, ii. 111—220., more copiously than any one I have read. His character of the Miscellanies is in p. 136.

† Meiners, pp. 155. 209. In the latter passage Meiners censures with apparent justice, the affected

words of Politian, some of which he did not scruple to take from such writers as Apuleius and Tertullian, with an inexcusable display of erudition at the expense of good taste.

‡ Huet. apud Blount in Politiano.

ceive that the age of Poggio, Filelfo, and Valla was already left far behind by a new generation; these had been well employed as the pioneers of ancient literature, but for real erudition and taste we must descend to Politian, Christopher Landino, and Hermolaus Barbarus.*

79. The *Cornucopia sive linguæ Latinæ Commentarii*, by Nicolas Perotti, bishop of Siponto, suggests rather more by its title than the work itself seems to warrant. It is a copious commentary upon part of Martial; in which he takes occasion to explain a vast many Latin words, and has been highly extolled by Morhof, and by writers quoted in Baillet and Blount. To this commentary is appended an alphabetical index of words, which rendered it a sort of dictionary for the learned reader. Perotti lived a little before this time; but the first edition seems to have been in 1489. He also wrote a small Latin grammar, frequently reprinted in the fifteenth century, and was an indifferent translator of Polybius.†

Cornucopia
of Perotti.

80. We have not thought it worth while to mention the Latin poets of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They are numerous, and somewhat rude, from Petrarch and Boccace to Maphæus Vegius, the continuator of the *Æneid* in

Latin
poetry of
Politian.

* Meiners, Roscoe, Corniani, Heeren, and Greswell's *Memoirs of early Italian scholars*, are the best authorities to whom the reader can have recourse for the character of Politian, besides his own works. I think, however, that Heeren has hardly done justice to Politian's poetry. Tira-

boschi is unsatisfactory. Blount, as usual, collects the suffrages of the sixteenth century.

† Heeren, 272. Morhof, i. 821., who calls Perotti the first compiler of good Latin, from whom those who followed have principally borrowed. See also Baillet and Blount for testimonies to Perotti.

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a thirteenth book, first printed in 1471, and very frequently afterwards. This is, probably, the best versification before Politian. But his Latin poems display considerable powers of description, and a strong feeling of the beauties of Roman poetry. The style is imbued with these, not too ambitiously chosen, nor in the manner called Centonism, but so as to give a general elegance to the composition, and to call up pleasing associations in the reader of taste. This, indeed, is the common praise of good versifiers in modern Latin, and not peculiarly appropriate to Politian, who is inferior to some who followed, though to none, as I apprehend, that preceded in that numerous fraternity. His ear is good, and his rhythm, with a few exceptions, musical and Virgilian. Some defects are nevertheless worthy of notice. He is often too exuberant, and apt to accumulate details of description. His words, unauthorised by any legitimate example, are very numerous; a fault in some measure excusable by the want of tolerable dictionaries; so that the memory was the only test of classical precedent. Nor can we deny that Politian's Latin poetry is sometimes blemished by affected and effeminate expressions, by a too studious use of repetitions, and by a love of diminutives, according to the fashion of his native language, carried beyond all bounds that correct Augustan latinity could possibly have endured. This last fault, and to a man of good taste it is an unpleasing one, belongs to a great part of the lyrical and even elegiac writers in modern Latin. The example of Catullus would probably have been urged in excuse;

but perhaps Catullus went farther than the best judges approved; and nothing in his poems can justify the excessive abuse of that effeminate grace, what the stern Persius would have called, “*summa delumbe saliva*,” which pervades the poetry both of Italian and Cisalpine Latinists for a long period. On the whole, Politian, like many of his followers, is calculated to delight and mislead a schoolboy, but may be read with pleasure by a man.*

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81. Amidst all the ardour for the restoration of classical literature in Italy, there might seem reason to apprehend that native originality would not meet its due reward, and even that the discouraging notion of a degeneracy in the powers of the human mind might come to prevail. Those who annex an exaggerated value to correcting an unimportant passage in an ancient author, or, which is much the same, interpreting some worthless inscription, can hardly escape the imputation of pedantry; and doubtless this reproach might justly fall on many of the learned in that age, as, with less excuse, it has often done upon their successors. We have already seen that, for a hundred years, it was thought unworthy a man of letters, even though a poet, to write in Italian; and Politian, with his great patron Lorenzo, deserves no small honour for having disdained the false vanity of the philologists. Lorenzo stands at the head of the Italian poets of the fifteenth century in the sonnet as well as in the light lyrical composition. His

Italian
poetry of
Lorenzo.

* The extracts from Politian, entitled *Poemata Italorum*, are extremely well chosen, and give a just measure of most of them.

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predecessors, indeed, were not likely to remove the prejudice against vernacular poetry. Several of his sonnets appear, both for elevation and elegance of style, worthy of comparison with those of the next age. But perhaps his most original claim to the title of a poet is founded upon the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, or carnival songs, composed for the popular shows on festivals. Some of these, which are collected in a volume printed in 1558, are by Lorenzo, and display a union of classical grace and imitation with the native raciness of Florentine gaiety.*

Pulci.

82. But at this time appeared a poet of a truly modern school, in one of Lorenzo's intimate society, Luigi Pulci. The first edition of his *Morgante Maggiore*, containing twenty-three cantos, to which five were subsequently added, was published at Venice in 1481. The taste of the Italians has always been strongly inclined to extravagant combinations of fancy, caprices rapid and sportive as the animal from which they take their name. The susceptible and versatile imaginations of that people, and their habitual cheerfulness, enable them to render the serious and terrible instrumental to the ridiculous, without becoming, like some modern fictions, merely hideous and absurd.

Character
of *Morgante*
Maggiore.

83. The *Morgante Maggiore* was evidently suggested by some long romances written within the preceding century in the octave stanza, for

* Corniani. Roscoe. Crescimbeni (*della volgar poesia*, ii. 324.) strongly asserts Lorenzo to be the restorer of poetry, which had never

been more barbarous than in his youth. But certainly the *Giostra* of Politian was written while Lorenzo was very young.

which the fabulous chronicle of Turpin, and other fictions wherein the same real and imaginary personages had been introduced, furnished the materials. Under pretence of ridiculing the intermixture of sacred allusions with the romantic legends, Pulci carried it to an excess; which, combined with some sceptical insinuations of his own, seems clearly to display an intention of exposing religion to contempt.* As to the heroes of his romance, there can be, as it seems, no sort of doubt, that he designed them for nothing else than the butts of his fancy; that the reader might scoff at those whom duller poets had held up to admiration. It has been a question among Italian critics, whether the poem of Pulci is to be reckoned burlesque.† This may seem to turn on the definition,

* The story of Meridiana, in the eighth canto, is sufficient to prove Pulci's irony to have been exercised on religion. It is well known to the readers of the *Morgante*. It has been alleged in the *Biographie Universelle*, that he meant only to turn into ridicule "*ces muses mendiantes du 14me siècle*," the authors of la Spagna or *Buovo d'Antona*, who were in the habit of beginning their songs with scraps of the liturgy, and even of introducing theological doctrines in the most absurd and misplaced style. Pulci has given us much of the latter, wherein some have imagined that he had the assistance of Ficinus.

† This seems to have been an old problem in Italy. Corniani, ii. 302.; and the gravity of Pulci has been maintained of late by such respectable authorities as Foscolo and Panizzi. Ginguéné, who does not go this length, thinks

the death of Orlando, and his last prayer, both pathetic and sublime. I can see nothing in it but the systematic spirit of parody which we find in Pulci. But the lines on the death of Forisena, in the fourth canto, are really graceful and serious. The following remarks on Pulci's style come from a more competent judge than myself.

"There is something harsh in Pulci's manner, owing to his abrupt transition from one idea to another, and to his carelessness of grammatical rules. He was a poet by nature, and wrote with ease, but he never cared for sacrificing syntax to meaning; he did not mind saying any thing incorrectly, if he were but sure that his meaning would be guessed. The rhyme very often compels him to employ expressions, words, and even lines which frequently render the sense obscure and the passage crooked, without producing any other effect

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though I do not see what definition could be given, consistently with the use of language, that would exclude it; it is intended as a caricature of the poetical romances, and might even seem by anticipation a satirical, though not ill-natured, parody on the *Orlando Furioso*. That he meant to excite any other emotion than laughter cannot, as it seems, be maintained; and a very few stanzas of a more serious character, which may rarely be found, are not enough to make an exception to his general design. The *Morgante* was to the poetical romances of chivalry, what *Don Quixote* was to their brethren in prose.

84. A foreigner must admire the vivacity of the narrative, the humorous gaiety of the characters, the adroitness of the satire. But the Italians, and especially the Tuscans, delight in the raciness of Pulci's Florentine idiom, which we cannot equally relish. He has not been without influence on men of more celebrity than himself. In several passages of Ariosto, especially the visit of Astolfo to the moon, we trace a resemblance not wholly fortuitous. Voltaire, in one of his most popular poems, took the dry archness of Pulci, and exaggerated the profaneness, superadding the ob-

than that of destroying a fine stanza. He has no similes of any particular merit, nor does he stand eminent in description. His verses almost invariably make sense taken singly, and convey distinct and separate ideas. Hence he wants that richness, fulness, and smooth flow of diction, which is indispensable to an epic poet, and

to a noble description or comparison. Occasionally, when the subject admits of a powerful sketch which may be presented with vigour and spirit by a few strokes boldly drawn, Pulci appears to a great advantage."—Panizzi on romantic poetry of Italians, in the first volume of his *Orlando Innamorato*, p. 298.

scenity from his own stores. But Mr. Frere, with none of these two ingredients in his admirable vein of humour, has come, in the War of the Giants, much closer to the Morgante Maggiore than any one else.

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85. The Platonic academy, in which the chief of the Medici took so much delight, did not fail to reward his care. Marsilius Ficinus, in his *Theologica Platonica* (1482), developed a system chiefly borrowed from the later Platonists of the Alexandrian school, full of delight to the credulous imagination, though little appealing to the reason, which, as it seemed remarkably to coincide in some respects with the received tenets of the church, was connived at in a few reveries, which could not so well bear the test of an orthodox standard. He supported his philosophy by a translation of Plato into Latin, executed at the direction of Lorenzo, and printed before 1490. Of this translation Buhle has said, that it has been very unjustly reproached with want of correctness; it is, on the contrary, perfectly conformable to the original, and has even, in some passages, enabled us to restore the text; the manuscripts used by Ficinus, I presume, not being in our hands. It has also the rare merit of being at once literal, perspicuous, and in good Latin.*

Platonic
theology of
Ficinus.

86. But the Platonism of Ficinus was not wholly that of the master. It was based on the eman-

Doctrine
of Averroes
on the soul.

* Hist. de la Philosophie, vol. ii. The fullest account of the philosophy of Ficinus has been given by Buhle. Those who seek less minute information may have re-

course to Brucker or Corniani; or, if they are content with still less, to Tiraboschi, Roscoe, Heeren, or the Biographie Universelle.

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ation of the human soul from God, and its capacity of re-union by an ascetic and contemplative life ; a theory perpetually re-produced in various modifications of meaning, and far more of words. The nature and immortality of the soul, the functions and distinguishing characters of angels, the being and attributes of God, engaged the thoughtful mind of Ficinus. In the course of his high speculations he assailed a doctrine, which, though rejected by Scotus and most of the schoolmen, had gained much ground among the Aristotelians, as they deemed themselves, of Italy ; a doctrine first held by Averroes ; that there is one common intelligence, active, immortal, indivisible, unconnected with matter, the soul of human kind, which is not in any one man, because it has no material form, but which yet assists in the rational operations of each man's personal soul, and from those operations which are all conversant with particulars, derives its own knowledge of universals. Thus, if I understand what is meant, which is rather subtle, it might be said, that as in the common theory particular sensations furnish means to the soul of forming general ideas, so, in that of Averroes, the ideas and judgments of separate human souls furnish collectively the means of that knowledge of universals, which the one great soul of mankind alone can embrace. This was a theory built, as some have said, on the bad Arabic version of Aristotle which Averroes used. But, whatever might have first suggested it to the philosopher of Cordova, it seems little else than an expansion of the Realist hypothesis, urged to a degree of appa-

rent paradox. For if the human soul, as an universal, possess an objective reality, it must surely be intelligent; and, being such, it may seem no extravagant hypothesis, though one incapable of that demonstration we now require in philosophy, to suppose that it acts upon the subordinate intelligences of the same species, and receives impressions from them. By this also they would reconcile the knowledge we were supposed to possess of the reality of universals, with the acknowledged impossibility, at least in many cases, of representing them to the mind.

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87. Ficinus is the more prompt to refute the Averroists, that they all maintained the mortality of the particular soul, while it was his endeavour, by every argument that erudition and ingenuity could supply, to prove the contrary. The whole of his Platonic Theology appears a beautiful, but too visionary and hypothetical, system of theism, the ground-works of which lay deep in the meditations of ancient oriental sages. His own treatise, of which a very copious account will be found in Buhle, soon fell into oblivion; but it belongs to a class of literature, which, in all its extension, has, full as much as any other, engaged the human mind.

Opposed
by Ficinus.

88. The thirst for hidden knowledge, by which man is distinguished from brutes, and the superior races of men from savage tribes, burns generally with more intenseness in proportion as the subject is less definitely comprehensible, and the means of certainty less attainable. Even our own interest in things beyond the sensible world does

Desire of
man to
explore
mysteries.

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not appear to be the primary or chief source of the desire we feel to be acquainted with them; it is the pleasure of belief itself, of associating the conviction of reality with ideas not presented by sense; it is sometimes the necessity of satisfying a restless spirit, that first excites our endeavour to withdraw the veil that conceals the mystery of their being. The few great truths in religion that reason discovers, or that an explicit revelation deigns to communicate, sufficient as they may be for our practical good, have proved to fall very short of the ambitious curiosity of man. They leave so much imperfectly known, so much wholly unexplored, that in all ages he has never been content without trying some method of filling up the void. These methods have often led him to folly, and weakness, and crime. Yet as those who want the human passions, in their excess the great fountains of evil, seem to us maimed in their nature, so an indifference to this knowledge of invisible things, or a premature despair of attaining it, may be accounted an indication of some moral or intellectual deficiency, some scantness of due proportion in the mind.

Various
methods
employed.

89. The means to which recourse has been had to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge in matters relating to the Deity, or to such of his intelligent creatures as do not present themselves in ordinary objectiveness to our senses, have been various, and may be distributed into several classes. Reason itself, as the most valuable, though not the most frequent in use, may be reckoned the first. Whatever deductions have suggested themselves

Reason and
inspiration.

to the acute, or analogies to the observant, mind, whatever has seemed the probable interpretation of revealed testimony, is the legitimate province of a sound and rational theology. But so fallible appears the reason of each man to others, and often so dubious are its inferences to himself, so limited is the span of our faculties, so incapable are they of giving more than a vague and conjectural probability, where we demand most of definiteness and certainty, that few, comparatively speaking, have been content to acquiesce even in their own hypotheses upon no other grounds than argument has supplied. The uneasiness that is apt to attend suspense of belief has required, in general, a more powerful remedy. Next to those who have solely employed their rational faculties in theology, we may place those who have relied on a supernatural illumination. These have nominally been many ; but the imagination, like the reason, bends under the incomprehensibility of spiritual things ; a few excepted, who have become founders of sects, and lawgivers to the rest, the mystics fell into a beaten track, and grew mechanical even in their enthusiasm.

90. No solitary and unconnected meditations, however, either of the philosopher or the mystic, could furnish a sufficiently extensive stock of theological faith for the multitude, who, by their temper and capacities, were more prone to take it at the hands of others than choose any tenets for themselves. They looked, therefore, for some authority upon which to repose ; and instead of builders, became as it were occupants of mansions prepared for

Extended
inferences
from sacred
books.

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them by more active minds. Among those who acknowledge a code of revealed truths, the Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, this authority has been sought in largely expansive interpretations of their sacred books; either of positive obligation, as the decisions of general councils were held to be, or at least of such weight as a private man's reason, unless he were of great name himself, was not permitted to contravene. These expositions, in the Christian church, as well as among the Jews, were frequently allegorical; a hidden stream of esoteric truth was supposed to flow beneath all the surface of Scripture; and every text germinated, in the hands of the preacher, into meanings far from obvious, but which were presumed to be not undesigned. This scheme of allegorical interpretation began among the earliest fathers, and spread with perpetual expansion through the middle ages.* The Reformation swept most of it away; but it has frequently revived in a more partial manner. We mention it here only as one great means of enabling men to believe more than they had done, of communicating to them what was to be received as divine truths, not additional to Scripture, because they were concealed in it, but such as the church could only have learned through its teachers.

Confidence
in tradi-
tions.

91. Another large class of religious opinions stood on a somewhat different footing. They were, in a proper sense, according to the notions of those times, revealed from God; though not in the

* Fleury (5me discours), xvii. 37. Mosheim, *passim*.

sacred writings which were the chief depositories of his word. Such were the received traditions in each of the three great religions, sometimes absolutely infallible, sometimes, as in the former case of interpretations, resting upon such a basis of authority, that no one was held at liberty to withhold his assent. The Jewish traditions were of this kind; and the Mahometans have trod in the same path. We may add to these the legends of saints: none, perhaps, were positively enforced as of faith; but a Franciscan was not to doubt the inspiration and miraculous gifts of his founder. Nor was there any disposition in the people to doubt of them; they filled up with abundant measure the cravings of the heart and fancy, till, having absolutely palled both by excess, they brought about a kind of reaction, which has taken off much of their efficacy.

92. Francis of Assisi may naturally lead us to the last mode in which the spirit of theological belief manifested itself; the confidence in a particular man, as the organ of a special divine illumination. But though this was fully assented to by the order he instituted, and probably by most others, it cannot be said that Francis pretended to set up any new tenets, or enlarge, except by his visions and miracles, the limits of spiritual knowledge. Nor would this, in general, have been a safe proceeding in the middle ages. Those who made a claim to such light from heaven as could irradiate what the church had left dark seldom failed to provoke her jealousy. It is, therefore, in later times, and under more tolerant governments, that we shall find the fanatics, or impostors, whom

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Confidence
in individuals as
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Jewish
Cabbala.

the multitude has taken for witnesses of divine truth, or at least as interpreters of the mysteries of the invisible world.

93. In the class of traditional theology, or what might be called complementary revelation, we must place the Jewish Cabbala. This consisted in a very specific and complex system, concerning the nature of the Supreme Being, the emanation of various orders of spirits in successive links from his essence, their properties and characters. It is evidently one modification of the oriental philosophy, borrowing little from the Scriptures, at least through any natural interpretation of them, and the offspring of the Alexandrian Jews, not far from the beginning of the Christian æra. They referred it to a tradition from Esdras, or some other eminent person, on whom they fixed as the depository of an esoteric theology communicated by divine authority. The Cabbala was received by the Jewish doctors in the first centuries after the fall of their state; and after a period of long duration, as remarkable for the neglect of learning in that people as in the Christian world, it revived again in that more genial season, the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when the brilliancy of many kinds of literature among the Saracens of Spain excited their Jewish subjects to emulation. Many conspicuous men illustrate the Hebrew learning of those and the succeeding ages. It was not till now, about the middle of the fifteenth century, that they came into contact with the Christians in theological philosophy. The Platonism of Ficinus, derived, in great measure, from that of Plotinus and the Alex-

andrian school, was easily connected, by means especially of the writings of Philo, with the Jewish orientalism, sisters as they were of the same family. Several forgeries in celebrated names, easy to effect and sure to deceive, had been committed in the first ages of Christianity by the active propagators of this philosophy. Hermes Trismegistus, and Zoroaster, were counterfeited in books which most were prone to take for genuine, and which it was not then easy to refute on critical grounds. These altogether formed a huge mass of imposture, or, at best, of arbitrary hypothesis, which, for more than a hundred years after this time, obtained an undue credence, and consequently retarded the course of real philosophy in Europe.*

94. They never gained over a more distinguished proselyte, or one whose credulity was more to be regretted, than a young man who appeared at Florence in 1485, John Picus of Mirandola. He was then twenty-two years old, the younger son of an illustrious family, which held that little principality as an imperial fief. At the age of fourteen he was sent to Bologna, that he might study the canon law, with a view to the ecclesiastical profession; but after two years he felt an inexhaustible desire for more elevated, though less profitable sciences. He devoted the next six years to the philosophy of the schools, in the chief universities of Italy and France: whatever disputable subtilties the metaphysics and theo-

Picus of
Mirandola.

* Brucker, vol. ii. Buhle, ii. 316. Meiners, *Vergl. der sitten*, iii. 277.

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logy of that age could supply, became familiar to his mind; but to these he added a knowledge of the Hebrew and other eastern languages, a power of writing Latin with grace, and of amusing his leisure with the composition of Italian poetry. The natural genius of Picus is well shown, though in a partial manner, by a letter which will be found among those of Politian, in answer to Hermolaus Barbarus. His correspondent had spoken with the scorn, and almost bitterness, usual with philologists, of the Transalpine writers, meaning chiefly the schoolmen, for the badness of their Latin. The young scholastic answered, that he had been at first disheartened by the reflection that he had lost six years' labour; but considered afterwards, that the barbarians might say something for themselves, and puts a very good defence in their mouths; a defence which wants nothing but the truth of what he is forced to assume, that they had been employing their intellects upon things instead of words. Hermolaus found, however, nothing better to reply than the compliment, that Picus would be disavowed by the schoolmen for defending them in so eloquent a style.*

* The letter of Hermolaus is dated Apr. 1485. He there says, after many compliments to Picus himself: *Nec enim inter autores Latinæ linguæ numero Germanos istos et Teutonas qui ne viventes quidem vivebant, nedum ut extincti vivant, aut si vivant, vivunt in pœnam et contumeliam.* The answer of Picus is dated in June. A few lines from his pleading for the schoolmen will exhibit his ingenuity and elegance. *Admirentur*

nos sagaces in inquirendo, circumspectos in explorando, subtiles in contemplando, in judicando graves, implicitos in vinciendo, faciles in enodando. Admirentur in nobis brevitem styli, sætam rerum multarum atque magnarum, sub expositis verbis remotissimas sententias, plenas quæstionum, plenas solutionum, quam apti sumus, quam bene instructi ambiguitates tollere, scrupos diluere, involuta evolvere, flexanimis syllogismis et infir-

95. He learned Greek very rapidly, probably after his coming to Florence. And having been led, through Ficinus, to the study of Plato, he seems to have given up his Aristotelian philosophy for theories more congenial to his susceptible and credulous temper. These led him onwards to wilder fancies. Ardent in the desire of knowledge, incapable, in the infancy of criticism, to discern authentic from spurious writings, and perhaps disqualified, by his inconceivable rapidity in apprehending the opinions of others, from judging acutely of their reasonableness, Picus of Mirandola fell an easy victim to his own enthusiasm and the snares of fraud. An impostor persuaded him to purchase fifty Hebrew manuscripts, as having been composed by Esdras, and containing the most secret mysteries of the Cabbala. From this time, says Corniani, he imbibed more and more such idle fables, and wasted in dreams a genius formed to reach the most elevated and remote truths. In these spurious books of Esdras, he was astonished to find, as he says, more of Christianity than Judaism, and trusted them the more confidently for the very reason that demonstrates their falsity.*

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His credulity in the Cabbala.

mare falsa et vera confirmare. Viximus celebres, o Hermolae, et posthac vivemus, non in scholis grammaticorum et pædagogis, sed in philosophorum coronis, in conventibus sapientum, ubi non de matre Andromaches, non de Niobes filiis, atque id genus levibus nugis, sed de humanarum divinarumque rerum rationibus agitur et disputatur. In quibus

meditandis, inquirendis et enodandis, ita subtiles acuti acresque fuimus, ut anxii quandoque nimium et morosi fuisse forte videamur, si modo esse morosus quispiam aut curiosus nimio plus in indagando veritate potest. Polit. Epist. lib. 9.

* Corniani, iii. 63. Meiners, Lebensbeschreibung berühmter männer, ii. 21. Tiraboschi, vii. 325.

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His literary
perform-
ances.

96. Picus, about the end of 1486, repaired to Rome, and with permission of Innocent VIII. propounded his famous nine hundred theses, or questions, logical, ethical, mathematical, physical, metaphysical, theological, magical, and cabbalistical; upon every one of which he offered to dispute with any opponent. Four hundred of these propositions were from philosophers of Greece or Arabia, from the schoolmen, or from the Jewish doctors; the rest were announced as his own opinions, which, saving the authority of the church, he was willing to defend.* There was some need of this reservation; for several of his theses were ill-sounding, as it was called, in the ears of the orthodox. They raised a good deal of clamour against him; and the high rank, brilliant reputation, and obedient demeanour of Picus were all required to save him from public censure or more serious animadversions. He was compelled, however, to swear that he would adopt such an exposition of his theses as the pope should set forth. But as this was not done, he published an apology, especially vindicating his employment of cabbalistical and magical learning. This excited fresh attacks, which in some measure continued to harass him, till, on the accession of Alexander VI. to the papal chair, he was finally pronounced free from blamable intention. He had meantime, as we may infer from his later writings, receded from some of the bolder opinions of his youth. His mind became more devout, and more fearful of

* Meiners, p. 14.

deviating from the church. On his first appearance at Florence, uniting rare beauty with high birth and unequalled renown, he had been much sought by women, and returned their love. But at the age of twenty-five he withdrew himself from all worldly distraction, destroying, as it is said, his own amatory poems, to the regret of his friends.* He now published several works, of which the *Heptaplus* is a cabbalistic exposition of the first chapter of Genesis. It is remarkable that, with his excessive tendency to belief, he rejected altogether, and confuted in a distinct treatise, the popular science of astrology, in which men so much more conspicuous in philosophy have trusted. But he had projected many other undertakings of vast extent; an allegorical exposition of the New Testament, a defence of the Vulgate and Septuagint against the Jews, a vindication of Christianity against every species of infidelity and heresy; and finally, a harmony of philosophy, reconciling the apparent inconsistencies of all writers, ancient and modern, who deserved the name of wise, as he had already attempted by Plato and Aristotle. In these arduous labours he was cut off by a fever at the age of thirty-one, in 1494, on the very day that Charles VIII. made his entry into Florence. A man, so justly called the phoenix of his age, and so extraordinarily gifted by nature, ought not to be slightly passed over, though he may have left nothing which we could read with advantage. If we talk of the admirable Crichton, who is little

* Meiners, p. 10.

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better than a shadow, and lives but in panegyric, so much superior and more wonderful a person as John Picus of Mirandola should not be forgotten.*

State of
learning in
Germany.

97. If, leaving the genial city of Florence, we are to judge of the state of knowledge in our Cisalpine regions, and look at the books it was thought worth while to publish, which seems no bad criterion, we shall rate but lowly their proficiency in the classical literature so much valued in Italy. Four editions, and those chiefly of short works, were printed at Deventer, one at Cologne, one at Louvain, five perhaps at Paris, two at Lyons.† But a few undated books might, probably, be added. Either therefore the love of ancient learning had grown colder, which was certainly not the case, or it had never been strong enough to reward the labour of the too sanguine printers. Yet it was now striking root in Germany. The excellent schools of Munster and Schelstadt were established in some part of this decad; they trained those who were themselves to become instructors; and the liberal zeal of Langius extending beyond his immediate disciples, scarce any Latin author was published in Germany in which he did not correct the text.‡

* The long biography of Picus in Meiners is in great measure taken from a life written by his nephew, John Francis Picus, count of Mirandola, himself a man of great literary and philosophical reputation in the next century. Meiners has made more use of this than any one else; but much will be found concerning Picus, from this source, and from his own works, in Brucker, Buhle, Corni-

ani, and Tiraboschi. The epitaph on Picus by Hercules Strozza is, I believe, in the church of St. Mark:—

Joannes jacet hic Mirandola;
cætera nôrunt
Et Tagus et Ganges; forsan et
Antipodes.

† Panzer.

‡ Meiners Lebensbesch. ii. 328. Eichhorn, iii. 231—239.

The opportunities he had of doing so were not, as has been just seen, so numerous in this period as they became in the next. He had to withstand a potent and obstinate faction. The mendicant friars of Cologne, the head-quarters of barbarous superstition, clamoured against his rejection of the old school-books, and the entire reform of education. But Agricola addresses his friend in sanguine language: "I entertain the greatest hope from your exertions, that we shall one day wrest from this insolent Italy her vaunted glory of pre-eminent eloquence; and redeeming ourselves from the opprobrium of ignorance, barbarism, and incapacity of expression which she is ever casting upon us, may show our Germany so deeply learned, that Latium itself shall not be more Latin than she will appear."*

Agricola.

About 1482, Agricola was invited to the court of the elector palatine at Heidelberg. He seems not to have been engaged in public instruction, but passed the remainder of his life, unfortunately too short, for he died in 1485, in diffusing and promoting a taste for literature among his contemporaries. No German wrote in so pure a style, or possessed so large a portion of classical learning. Vives places him in dignity and grace of language even above Politian and Hermolaus.† The praises

* Unum hoc tibi affirmo, ingentem de te concipio fiduciam, summamque in spem adducor, fore aliquando, ut priscam insolenti Italiæ, et propemodum occupatam bene dicendi gloriam extorqueamus; vindicemusque nos, et ab ignavia, qua nos barbaros, indotosque et elingues, et si quid est his incultius, esse nos jactant,

exsolvamus, futuramque tam doctam et literatam Germaniam nostram, ut non Latinus vel ipsum sit Latium. This is quoted by Heeren, p. 154. and Meiners, ii. 329.

† Vix et hac nostra et patrum memoria fuit unus atque alter dignior, qui multum legeretur, multumque in manibus haberetur,

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of Erasmus, as well as of the later critics, if not so marked, are very freely bestowed. His letters are frequently written in Greek; a fashion of those who could; and as far as I have attended to them, seem equal in correctness to some from men of higher name in the next age.

Rhenish
academy.

98. The immediate patron of Agricola, through whom he was invited to Heidelberg, was John Camerarius, of the house of Dalberg, bishop of Worms, and chancellor of the Palatinate. He contributed much himself to the cause of letters in Germany; especially if he is to be deemed the founder, as probably he should be, of an early academy, the Rhenish Society, which, we are told, devoted its time to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew criticism, astronomy, music, and poetry; not scorning to relax their minds with dances and feasts, nor forgetting the ancient German attachment to the flowing cup.* The chief seat of the Rhenish

quam Radulphus Agricola Frisius; tantum est in ejus operibus ingenii, artis, gravitatis, dulcedinis, eloquentiæ, eruditionis; at is paucissimis noscitur, vir non minus, qui ab hominibus cognosceretur, dignus quam Politianus, vel Hermolaus Barbarus, quos mea quidem sententia, et majestate et suavitate dictionis non æquat modo, sed etiam vincit. Vives, Comment. in Augustin. (apud Blount, Censura Auctorum, sub nomine Agricola.)

Agnosco virum divini pectoris, eruditionis reconditæ, stylo minime vulgari, solidum, nervosum, elaboratum, compositum. In Italia summus esse poterat, nisi Germaniam prætulisset. Erasmus in

Ciceroniano. He speaks as strongly in many other places. Testimonies to the merits of Agricola from Huet, Vossius, and others, are collected by Bayle, Blount, Baillet, and Nicéron. Meiners has written his life, ii. pp. 332—363.; and several of his letters will be found among those addressed to Reuchlin, Epistolæ ad Reuchlinum; a collection of great importance for this portion of literary history.

* Studebant eximia hæc ingenia Latinorum, Græcorum, Ebræorumque scriptorum lectioni, cumprimis criticæ; astronomiam et artem musicam excolebant. Poesin atque jurisprudentiam sibi habebant commendatam; imo et interdum

Society was at Heidelberg; but it had associate branches in other parts of Germany, and obtained imperial privileges. No member of this academy was more conspicuous than Conrad Celtes, who has sometimes been reckoned its founder, which, from his youth, is hardly probable, and was, at least, the chief instrument of its subsequent extension. He was indefatigable in the vineyard of literature, and, travelling to different parts of Germany, exerted a more general influence than Agricola himself. Celtes was the first from whom Saxony derived some taste for learning. His Latin poetry was far superior to any that had been produced in the empire; and for this, in 1487, he received the laurel crown from Frederic III.*

99. Reuchlin, in 1482, accompanied the duke of Wirtemberg on a visit to Rome. He thus became acquainted with the illustrious men of Italy, and convinced them of his own pretensions to the name of a scholar. The old Constantinopolitan Argypopolus, on hearing him translate a passage of Thucydides, exclaimed, "Our banished Greece has now flown beyond the Alps." Yet Reuchlin, though from some other circumstances of his life a more celebrated, was not probably so learned or so accomplished a man as Agricola; he was withdrawn from public tuition by the favour of several

gaudia curis interponebant. Nocturno nimirum tempore, defessi laboribus, ludere solebant, saltare, joculari cum mulierculis, epulari, ac more Germanorum inveterato strenue potare. Jugler, *Hist. Litteraria*, p. 1993. (vol. iii.) The passage seems to be taken from Ru-

precht, *Oratio de Societate Litteraria Rhenana*, Jenæ, 1752, which I have not seen.

* Jugler, ubi supra. Eichhorn, ii. 557. Heeren, p. 160. *Biogr. Universelle*, art. Celtes, Dalberg, Trithemius.

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French lan-
guage and
poetry.

princes, in whose courts he filled honourable offices; and after some years more, he fell unfortunately into the same seducing error as Picus of Mirandola, and sacrificed his classical pursuits for the Cabbalistic philosophy.

100. Though France contributed little to the philologer, several books were now published in French. In the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, 1486, a slight improvement in polish of language is said to be discernible.* The poems of Villon are rather of more importance. They were first published in 1489; but many of them had been written thirty years before. Boileau has given Villon credit for being the first who cleared his style from the rudeness and redundancy of the old romancers.† But this praise, as some have observed, is more justly due to the duke of Orleans, a man of full as much talent as Villon, with a finer taste. The poetry of the latter, as might be expected from a life of dissoluteness and roguery, is often low and coarse; but he seems by no means incapable of a moral strain, not destitute of terseness and spirit. Martial d'Auvergne, in his *Vigiles de la mort de Charles VII.*, which, from its subject, must have been written soon after 1460, though not printed till 1490, displays, to judge from the extracts in Goujet, some compass of imagination.‡ The French poetry of this age was still full of allegorical morality, and had lost a part of its original raciness. Those who desire an acquaintance with it

* Essai du C. François de Neufchateau sur les meilleurs ouvrages en prose; prefixed to *Œuvres de Pascal* (1819), i. p. cxx.

† Villon fut le premier dans des siècles obscurs

Debrouiller l'art confus de nos vieux romanciers.

Art Poétique, l. i. v. 117.

‡ Goujet, *Bibliothèque Française*, vol. x.

may have recourse to the author just mentioned, or to Bouterwek; and extracts, though not so copious as the title promises, will be found in the *Recueil des anciens poètes Français*.

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101. The modern drama of Europe is derived, like its poetry, from two sources, the one ancient or classical, the other mediæval; the one an imitation of Plautus and Seneca, the other a gradual refinement of the rude scenic performances, denominated miracles, mysteries, or moralities. Latin plays upon the former model, a few of which are extant, were written in Italy during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and sometimes represented, either in the universities, or before an audience of ecclesiastics and others who could understand them.* One of these, the *Catinia* of Secco Polentone, written about the middle of the fifteenth century, and translated by a son of the author into the Venetian dialect, was printed in 1482. This piece, however, was confined to the press.† Sabellicus, as quoted by Tiraboschi, has given to Pomponius Lætus the credit of having re-established the theatre at Rome, and caused the plays of Plautus and Terence, as well as some more modern, which we may presume to have been in Latin, to be performed before the pope, probably Sixtus IV. And James of Volterra, in a diary published by Muratori, expressly mentions a History of Constantine represented in the papal palace during the carnival of 1484.‡ In imitation of Italy, but, perhaps, a little after the present decennial period, Reuchlin

European
drama.

Latin.

* Tiraboschi, vii. 200.

† Id. p. 201.

‡ Id. p. 204.

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brought Latin plays of his own composition before a German audience. They were represented by students of Heidelberg. An edition of his *Pro-gymnasmatum Scenica*, containing some of these comedies, was printed in 1498. It has been said that one of them is taken from the French farce *Maitre Patelin* *; while another, entitled *Sergius*, according to Warton, flies a much higher pitch, and is a satire on bad kings and bad ministers; though, from the account of Meiners, it seems rather to fall on the fraudulent arts of the monks. † The book is very scarce, and I have never seen it. Conrad Celtis, not long after Reuchlin, produced his own tragedies and comedies in the public halls of German cities. It is to be remembered, that the oral Latin language might at that time be tolerably familiar to a considerable audience in Germany.

Orfeo of
Politian.

102. The *Orfeo* of Politian has claimed precedence as the earliest represented drama, not of a religious nature, in a modern language. This was written by him in two days, and acted before the court of Mantua in 1483. Roscoe has called it the first example of the musical drama, or Italian opera; but though he speaks of this as agreed by general consent, it is certain that the *Orfeo* was not designed for musical accompaniment, except, probably, in the songs and chorusses. ‡ According

* Greswell's *Early Parisian Press*, p. 124.; quoting *la Monnoye*. This seems to be confirmed by Meiners, i. 63.

† Warton, iii. 203. Meiners, i. 62. The *Sergius* was represented at Heidelberg about 1497.

‡ Burney (*Hist. of Music*, iv.

17.) seems to countenance this; but Tiraboschi does not speak of musical accompaniment to the *Orfeo*; and Corniani only says: *alcuni di essi sembrano dall' autor destinati ad accoppiarsi colla musica. Tali sono i canzoni e i cori alla greca.* Probably Roscoe did

to the analysis of the fable in *Ginguéné*, the *Orfeo* differs only from a legendary mystery by substituting one set of characters for another; and it is surely by an arbitrary definition that we pay it the compliment upon which the modern historians of literature seem to have agreed. Several absurdities which appear in the first edition are said not to exist in the original manuscripts from which the *Orfeo* has been reprinted.* We must give the next place to a translation of the *Menæchmi* of Plautus, acted at Ferrara in 1486, by order of Ercole I., and, as some have thought, his own production, or to some original plays said to have been performed at the same brilliant court in the following years.†

103. The less regular, though in their day not less interesting, class of scenical stories, commonly called mysteries, all of which related to religious subjects, were never in more reputation than at this time. It is impossible to fix their first appearance at any single æra, and the inquiry into the origin of dramatic representation must be very limited in its subject, or perfectly futile in its scope. All nations, probably, have at all times, to a certain extent, amused themselves both with pantomimic and oral representation of a feigned story;

Origin of
dramatic
mysteries.

not mean all that his words imply; for the origin of recitative, in which the essence of the Italian opera consists, more than a century afterwards, is matter of notoriety.

* Tiraboschi, vii. 216. *Ginguéné*, iii. 514. *Andrés*, v. 125., discussing the history of the Italian and Spanish theatres, gives

the precedence to the *Orfeo* as a represented play, though he conceives the first act of the *Celestina* to have been written and well known not later than the middle of the fifteenth century.

† Tiraboschi, vii. 203, et post. Roscoe, *Leo X.*, ch. ii. *Ginguéné*, vi. 18.

CHAP. the sports of children are seldom without both ;
 III. and the exclusive employment of the former, instead of being a first stage of the drama, as has sometimes been assumed, is rather a variety in the course of its progress.

Their early
 stage.

104. The Christian drama arose on the ruins of the heathen theatre : it was a natural substitute of real sympathies for those which were effaced and condemned. Hence we find Greek tragedies on sacred subjects almost as early as the establishment of the church, and we have testimonies to their representation at Constantinople. Nothing of this kind being proved with respect to the west of Europe in the dark ages, it has been conjectured, not improbably, though without necessity, that the pilgrims, of whom great numbers repaired to the East in the eleventh century, might have obtained notions of scenical dialogue, with a succession of characters, and with an ornamental apparatus, in which theatrical representation properly consists. The earliest mention of them, it has been said, is in England. Geoffry, afterwards abbot of St. Albans, while teaching a school at Dunstable, caused one of the shows, vulgarly called miracles, on the story of St. Catherine to be represented in that town. Such is the account of Matthew Paris, who mentions the circumstance incidentally, in consequence of a fire that ensued. This must have been within the first twenty years of the twelfth century.* It is not to be questioned, that

* Matt. Paris, p. 1007. (edit. and Beauchamps, *Hist. du théâtre* 1684). See Warton's 34th section, Français, vol. i., or Bouterwek, (iii. 193—233.), for the early drama, v. 95—117., for the French in

Geoffry, a native of France, had some earlier models in his own country. Le Bœuf gives an account of a mystery written in the middle of the preceding century, wherein Virgil is introduced among the prophets that come to adore the Saviour; doubtless in allusion to the fourth eclogue.

105. Fitz-Stephen, in the reign of Henry II., dwells on the sacred plays acted in London, representing the miracles or passions of martyrs. They became very common by the names of mysteries or miracles, both in England and on the Continent, and were not only exhibited within the walls of convents, but upon public occasions and festivals for the amusement of the people. It is probable, however, that the performers for a long time were always ecclesiastics. The earlier of those religious dramas were in Latin. A Latin farce exists on St. Nicolas, older than the thirteenth century.* It was slowly that the modern languages were employed; and perhaps it might hence be presumed, that the greater part of the story was told through pantomime. But as this was unsatisfactory, and the spectators could not always follow the fable, there was an obvious inducement to make use of the vernacular language. The most ancient specimens appear to be those which Le Grand d'Aussy found among the compositions of the Trouveurs. He has published ex-

Extant
English
mysteries.

particular; Tiraboschi, *ubi supra*, or Riccoboni, *Hist. du théâtre Italien*, for that of Italy.

* *Journal des Savans*, 1828,

p. 297. These farces, according to M. Raynouard, were the earliest dramatic representations, and gave rise to the mysteries.

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tracts from three ; two of which are in the nature of legendary mysteries, while the third, which is far more remarkable, and may possibly be of the following century, is a pleasing pastoral drama, of which there seem to be no other instances in the mediæval period.* Bouterwek mentions a fragment of a German mystery, near the end of the thirteenth century.† Next to this it seems that we should place an English mystery called “ The Harrowing of Hell.” “ This,” its editor observes, “ is believed to be the most ancient production in a dramatic form in our language. The manuscript from which it is now printed is on vellum, and is certainly as old as the reign of Edward III., if not older. It probably formed one of a series of performances of the same kind, founded upon Scripture history.” It consists of a prologue, epilogue, and intermediate dialogue of nine persons, Dominus, Sathan, Adam, Eve, &c. Independently of the alleged age of the manuscript itself, the language will hardly be thought later than 1350.‡ This, however, seems to stand at no small distance from any extant work of the kind. Warton having referred the Chester mysteries to 1327, when he supposes them to have been written by Ranulph Higden, a learned monk of that city, best known as the author of the Polychronicon, Roscoe positively contradicts him, and denies that any drama-

* Fabliaux, ii. 119.

† ix. 265. The “ Tragedy of the ten virgins ” was acted at Eise-nach in 1322. This is evidently nothing but a mystery. Weber’s Illustrations of Northern Poetry, p. 19.

‡ Mr. Collier has printed twenty-five copies (why veteris tam parvus aceti?) of this very curious record of the ancient drama. I do not know that any other in Europe of that early age has yet been given to the press.

tic composition can be found in England anterior to the year 1500.* Two of these Chester mysteries have been since printed; but notwithstanding the very respectable authorities which assign them to the fourteenth century, I cannot but consider the language in which we now read them not earlier, to say the least, than the middle of the next. It is possible that they have in some degree been modernized. Mr. Collier has given an analysis of our own extant mysteries, or, as he prefers to call them, Miracle-plays.† There does not seem to be much dramatic merit, even with copious indulgence, in any of them; and some, such as the two Chester mysteries, are in the lowest style of buffoonery; yet they are of some importance in the absolute sterility of English literature during the age in which we presume them to have been written, the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV.

106. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were fertile of these religious dramas in many parts of Europe. They were frequently represented in Germany, but more in Latin than in the mother-tongue. The French scriptural theatre, whatever may have been previously exhibited, seems not to be traced in permanent existence beyond the last years of the fourteenth century. It was about

First
French
theatre.

* Lorenzo de' Medici, i. 399. Roscoe thinks there is reason to conjecture that the Miracle-play acted at Dunstable was in dumb show; and assumes the same of the "grotesque exhibitions" known by the name of the Harrowing of Hell. In this we have just seen that he was mistaken, and probably in the former.

† Hist. of English dramatic poetry, vol. ii. The Chester mysteries were printed for the Roxburgh Club, by my friend Mr. Markland; and what are called the Townley mysteries are announced for publication.

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1400, according to Beauchamps, or some years before, as the authorities quoted by Bouterwek imply, that the Confrairie de la Passion de N. S. was established as a regular body of actors at Paris.* They are said to have taken their name from the mystery of the passion, which in fact represented the whole life of our Lord from his baptism, and was divided into several days. In pomp of show they far excelled our English mysteries, in which few persons appeared, and the scenery was simple. But in the mystery of the passion, eighty-seven characters were introduced in the first day; heaven, earth, and hell combined to people the stage; several scenes were written for singing, and some for chorusses. The dialogue, of which I have only seen the few extracts in Bouterwek, is rather similar to that of our own mysteries, though less rude, and with more efforts at a tragic tone.†

Theatrical
machinery.

107. The mysteries, not confined to scriptural themes, embraced those which were hardly less sacred and trustworthy in the eyes of the people, the legends of saints. These afforded ample scope for the gratification which great part of mankind seem to take in witnessing the endurance of pain. Thus, in one of these Parisian mysteries, St. Barbara is hung up by the heels on the stage, and after uttering her remonstrances in that unpleasant situation, is torn with pincers and scorched with lamps before the audience. The decorations of this theatre must have appeared splendid. A large

* Beauchamps, *Recherches sur le théâtre Français*. Bouterwek, v. 96.

† Bouterwek, p. 100.

scaffolding at the back of the stage displayed heaven above and hell below, between which extended the world, with representations of the spot where the scene lay. Nor was the machinist's art unknown. An immense dragon, with eyes of polished steel, sprung out from hell, in a mystery exhibited at Metz in the year 1437, and spread his wings so near to the spectators that they were all in consternation.* Many French mysteries, chiefly without date of the year, are in print, and probably belong, typographically speaking, to the present century.† One bears, according to Brunet, the date of 1484. These may, however, have been written long before their publication. Beauchamps has given a list of early mysteries and moralities in the French language, beginning near the end of the fourteenth century.

108. The religious drama was doubtless full as ancient in Italy as in any other country; it was very congenial to a people whose delight in sensible objects is so intense. It did not supersede the extemporaneous performances, the mimi and histriones, who had probably never intermitted their sportive licence since the days of their Oscan fathers, and of whom we find mention, sometimes with severity, sometimes with toleration, in ecclesiastical writers‡; but it came into competition with them; and thus may be said to have commenced in the thirteenth century a war of regular comedy against the lawless savages of the stage, which has

Italian
religious
dramas.

* Bouterwek, pp. 103—106.

† Brunet, Manuel du libraire.

‡ Thomas Aquinas mentions

the *histrionatus ars*, as lawful if not abused. St. Antonin does the same. Riccoboni, i. 23.

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only been terminated in Italy within very recent recollection. We find a society del Gonfalone established at Rome in 1264, the statutes of which declare, that it is designed to represent the passion of Jesus Christ.* Lorenzo de' Medici condescended to publish a drama of this kind on the martyrdom of two saints; and a considerable collection of similar productions during the fifteenth century was in the possession of Mr. Roscoe.†

Moralities. 109. Next to the mysteries came the kindred class, styled moralities. But as these belong more peculiarly to the next century, both in England and France, though they began about the present time, we may better reserve them for that period.

Farces. There is still another species of dramatic composition, what may be called the farce, not always very distinguishable from comedy, but much shorter, admitting more buffoonery without reproach, and more destitute of any serious or practical end. It may be reckoned a middle link between the extemporaneous effusions of the mimes and the legitimate drama. The French have a diverting piece of this kind, *Maitre Patelin*, ascribed to Pierre Blanchet, and first printed in 1490. It was restored to the stage with much alteration, under the name of *l'Avocat Patelin*, about the beginning of the last century; and contains strokes of humour, which Molière would not have disdained.‡ Of

* Riccoboni. Tiraboschi, however, v. 376., disputes the antiquity of any scenical representations truly dramatic, in Italy; in which he seems to be mistaken.

† Life of Lorenzo, i. 402.

‡ The proverbial expression for quitting a digression, *Revenons à nos moutons*, is taken from this farce; which is at least short, and as laughable as most farces are. It seems to have been written not

these productions there were not a few in Germany, called Fastnachts-spiele, or Carnival plays, written in the licence which that season has generally permitted. They are scarce and of little value. The most remarkable is the Apotheosis of Pope Joan, a tragi-comic legend, written about 1480.*

110. Euclid was printed for the first time at Venice in 1482; the diagrams in this edition are engraved on copper, and remarkably clear and neat.† The translation is that of Campanus from the Arabic. The cosmography of Ptolemy, which had been already twice published in Italy, appeared the same year at Ulm, with maps by Donis, some of them traced after the plans drawn by Agathodæmon, some modern; and it was reprinted, as well as Euclid, at the same place in 1486. The tables of Regiomontanus were printed both at Augsburg and Venice in 1490. We may take this occasion of introducing two names, which do not exclusively belong to the exact sciences, nor to the present period.

Mathe-
matical
works.

111. Leo Baptista Alberti was a man, who, if measured by the universality of his genius, may claim a place in the temple of glory he has not

Leo Bap-
tista Al-
berti.

long before its publication. See Pasquier, *Recherches de la France*, l. viii. c. 59.; *Biogr. Univ.*, Blanchet; and Bouterwek, v. 118.

* Bouterwek, *Gesch. der Deutschen poesie*, ix. 357—367. Heinsius, *Lehrbuch der Sprachwissenschaft*, iv. 125.

† A beautiful copy of this edition, presented to Mocenigo doge of Venice, is in the British Museum.

The diagrams, especially those which represent solids, are better than in our modern editions of Euclid. I will take this opportunity of mentioning, that the earliest book, in which engravings are found, is the edition of Dante by Landino, published at Florence in 1481. See Brunet, *Manuel du libraire*, Dibdin's *Bibl. Spencer.*, &c.

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filled; the author of a Latin comedy, entitled *Philodoxios*, which the younger Aldus Manutius afterwards published as the genuine work of a certain ancient Lepidus; a moral writer in the various forms of dialogue, dissertation, fable, and light humour; a poet, extolled by some, though not free from the rudeness of his age; a philosopher of the Platonic school of Lorenzo; a mathematician and inventor of optical instruments; a painter, and the author of the earliest modern treatise on painting; a sculptor, and the first who wrote about sculpture; a musician, whose compositions excited the applause of his contemporaries; an architect of profound skill, not only displayed in many works, of which the church of Saint Francis at Rimini is the most admired, but in a theoretical treatise, *De re ædificatoria*, published posthumously in 1485. It has been called the only work on architecture which we can place on a level with that of Vitruvius, and by some has been preferred to it. Alberti had deeply meditated the remains of Roman antiquity, and endeavoured to derive from them general theorems of beauty, variously applicable to each description of buildings.*

112. This great man seems to have had two impediments to his permanent glory: one, that he came a few years too soon into the world, before his own language was become polished, and before the principles of taste in art had been wholly developed; the other, that, splendid as was his own

* Corniani. ii. 160. Tiraboschi, vii. 360.

genius, there were yet two men a little behind, in the presence of whom his star has paled; men, not superior to Alberti in universality of mental powers, but in their transcendancy and command over immortal fame. Many readers will have perceived to whom I allude,—Lionardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo.

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III.

113. None of the writings of Lionardo were published till more than a century after his death; and, indeed, the most remarkable of them are still in manuscript. We cannot, therefore, give him a determinate place under this rather than any other decennium; but as he was born in 1452, we may presume his mind to have been in full expansion before 1490. His Treatise on Painting is known as a very early disquisition on the rules of the art. But his greatest literary distinction is derived from those short fragments of his unpublished writings that appeared not many years since; and which, according, at least, to our common estimate of the age in which he lived, are more like revelations of physical truths vouchsafed to a single mind, than the superstructure of its reasoning upon any established basis. The discoveries which made Galileo, and Kepler, and Mæstlin, and Maurolycus, and Castelli, and other names illustrious, the system of Copernicus, the very theories of recent geologists, are anticipated by Da Vinci, within the compass of a few pages, not perhaps in the most precise language, or on the most conclusive reasoning, but so as to strike us with something like the awe of præternatural knowledge. In an age of so much dogmatism, he first laid down the grand principle

Lionardo
da Vinci.

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III.

of Bacon, that experiment and observation must be the guides to just theory in the investigation of nature. If any doubt could be harboured, not as to the right of Lionardo da Vinci to stand as the first name of the fifteenth century, which is beyond all doubt, but as to his originality in so many discoveries, which, probably, no one man, especially in such circumstances, has ever made, it must be on an hypothesis, not very untenable, that some parts of physical science had already attained a height which mere books do not record. The extraordinary works of ecclesiastical architecture in the middle ages, especially in the fifteenth century, as well as those of Toscanelli and Fioravanti, which we have mentioned, lend some countenance to this opinion; and it is said to be confirmed by the notes of Fra Mauro, a lay brother of a convent near Venice, on a planisphere constructed by him, and still extant. Lionardo himself speaks of the earth's annual motion, in a treatise that appears to have been written about 1510, as the opinion of many philosophers in his age. *

* The manuscripts of Lionardo da Vinci, now at Paris, are the justification of what has been said in the text. A short account of them was given by Venturi, who designed to have published a part; but, having relinquished that intention, the fragments he has made known are the more important. As they are very remarkable, and not, I believe, very generally known, I shall extract a few passages from his *Essai sur les ouvrages physico-mathématiques de Léonard de Vinci*. Paris, 1797.

En mécanique, Vinci connaissait, entr'autres choses : 1. La thé-

orie des forces appliquées obliquement au bras du levier ; 2. La résistance respective des poutres ; 3. Les loix du frottement données ensuite par Amontons ; 4. L'influence du centre de gravité sur les corps en repos ou en mouvement ; 5. L'application du principe des vitesses virtuelles à plusieurs cas que la sublime analyse a porté de nos jours à sa plus grande généralité. Dans l'optique il décrit la chambre obscure avant Porta, il explique avant Maurolycus la figure de l'image du soleil dans un trou de forme anguleuse ; il nous apprend la perspective aérienne, la nature

SECT. VI. 1491—1500.

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III.

State of Learning in Italy — Latin and Italian Poets — Learning in France and England — Erasmus — Popular Literature and Poetry — Other Kinds of Literature — General literary Character of Fifteenth Century — Book-trade, its Privileges and Restraints.

114. THE year 1494 is distinguished by an edition of Musæus, generally thought the first work

Aldine
Greek
editions.

des ombres colorées, les mouvemens de l'iris, les effets de la durée de l'impression visible, et plusieurs autres phénomènes de l'œil qu'on ne rencontre point dans Vitellion. Enfin non seulement Vinci avait remarqué tout ce que Castelli a dit un siècle après lui sur le mouvement des eaux; le premier me paraît même dans cette partie supérieur de beaucoup à l'autre, que l'Italie cependant a regardé comme le fondateur de l'hydraulique.

Il faut donc placer Léonard à la tête de ceux qui se sont occupés des sciences physico-mathématiques, et de la vraie méthode d'étudier parmi les modernes, p. 5.

The first extract Venturi gives is entitled, On the descent of heavy bodies combined with the rotation of the earth. He here assumes the latter, and conceives that a body falling to the earth from the top of a tower would have a compound motion in consequence of the terrestrial rotation. Venturi thinks that the writings of Nicolas de Cusa had set men on speculating concerning this before the time of Copernicus.

Vinci had very extraordinary lights as to mechanical motions. He says plainly, that the time of descent on inclined planes of equal height is as their length; that a

body descends along the arc of a circle sooner than down the chord, and that a body descending an inclined plane will re-ascend with the same velocity as if it had fallen down the height. He frequently repeats, that every body weighs in the direction of its movement, and weighs the more in the ratio of its velocity; by weight evidently meaning what we call force. He applies this to the centrifugal force of bodies in rotation: Pendant tout ce temps elle pèse sur la direction de son mouvement.

Lorsqu'on emploie une machine quelconque pour mouvoir un corps grave, toutes les parties de la machine qui ont un mouvement égal à celui du corps grave ont une charge égale au poids entier du même corps. Si la partie qui est le moteur a, dans le même temps, plus de mouvement que le corps mobile, elle aura plus de puissance que le mobile; et celà d'autant plus qu'elle se mouvra plus vite que le corps même. Si la partie qui est le moteur a moins de vitesse que le mobile, elle aura d'autant moins de puissance que ce mobile. If in this passage there is not the perfect luminousness of expression we should find in the best modern books, it seems to contain the philosophical theory of motion as unequivocally as any of them.

CHAP. from the press established at Venice by Aldus
III.

Vinci had a better notion of geology than most of his contemporaries, and saw that the sea had covered the mountains which contain shells: Ces coquillages ont vécu dans le même endroit lorsque l'eau de la mer le recouvrait. Les bancs, par la suite des temps, ont été recouverts par d'autres couches de limon de différentes hauteurs; ainsi, les coquilles ont été enclavées sous le bourbier amoncelé au dessus, jusqu'à sortir de l'eau. He seems even to have had an idea of the elevation of the continents, though he gives an unintelligible reason for it.

He explained the obscure light of the unilluminated part of the moon by the reflection of the earth, as Mæstlin did long after. He understood the camera obscura, and describes its effect. He perceived that respirable air must support flame: Lorsque l'air n'est pas dans un état propre à recevoir la flamme, il n'y peut vivre ni flamme ni aucun animal terrestre ou aérien. Aucun animal ne peut vivre dans un endroit où la flamme ne vit pas.

Vinci's observations on the conduct of the understanding are also very much beyond his time. I extract a few of them.

Il est toujours bon pour l'entendement d'acquiescer des connaissances quelles qu'elles soient; on pourra ensuite choisir les bonnes et écarter les inutiles.

L'interprète des artifices de la nature, c'est l'expérience. Elle ne se trompe jamais; c'est notre jugement qui quelquefois se trompe lui-même, parcequ'il s'attend à des effets auxquels l'expérience se refuse. Il faut consulter l'expérience, en varier les circonstances jusqu'à ce que nous en ayons tiré des règles générales; car c'est

elle qui fournit les vraies règles. Mais à quoi bon ces règles, me direz-vous? Je réponds qu'elles nous dirigent dans les recherches de la nature et les opérations de l'art. Elles empêchent que nous ne nous abusions nous-mêmes ou les autres, en nous promettant des résultats que nous ne saurions obtenir.

Il n'y a point de certitude dans les sciences où on ne peut pas appliquer quelque partie des mathématiques, ou qui n'en dépendent pas de quelque manière.

Dans l'étude des sciences qui tiennent aux mathématiques, ceux qui ne consultent pas la nature, mais les auteurs, ne sont pas les enfans de la nature; je dirais qu'ils n'en sont que les petits fils: elle seule, en effet, est le maître des vrais génies. Mais voyez la sottise! on se moque d'un homme qui aimera mieux apprendre de la nature elle-même, que des auteurs, qui n'en sont que les clercs. Is not this the precise tone of Lord Bacon?

Vinci says, in another place: Mon dessein est de citer d'abord l'expérience, et de démontrer ensuite pourquoi les corps sont contrainsts d'agir de telle manière. C'est la méthode qu'on doit observer dans les recherches des phénomènes de la nature. Il est bien vrai que la nature commence par le raisonnement, et finit par l'expérience; mais n'importe, il nous faut prendre la route opposée: comme j'ai dit, nous devons commencer par l'expérience, et tâcher par son moyen d'en découvrir la raison.

He ascribes the elevation of the equatorial waters above the polar to the heat of the sun: Elles entrent en mouvement de tous les côtés de cette éminence aqueuse

Manutius, who had settled there in 1489.* In the course of about twenty years, with some interruption, he gave to the world several of the principal Greek authors; and though, as we have seen, not absolutely the earliest printer in that language, he so far excelled all others in the number of his editions, that he may be justly said to stand at the head of the list. It is right, however, to mention, that Zarot had printed Hesiod and Theocritus in one volume, and also Isocrates, at Milan, in 1493; that the *Anthologia* appeared at Florence in 1494; Lucian and Apollonius Rhodius in 1496; the lexicon of Suidas, at Milan, in 1499. About fifteen editions of Greek works, without reckoning Craston's lexicon and several grammars, had been published before the close of the century.† The most remarkable of the Aldine

pour rétablir leur sphéricité parfaite. This is not the true cause of their elevation, but by what means could he know the fact?

Vinci understood fortification well, and wrote upon it. Since in our time, he says, artillery has four times the power it used to have, it is necessary that the fortification of towns should be strengthened in the same proportion. He was employed on several great works of engineering. So wonderful was the variety of power in this miracle of nature. For we have not mentioned that his *Last Supper* at Milan is the earliest of the great pictures in Italy, and that some productions of his easel vie with those of Raphael. His only published work, the *Treatise on Painting*, does him injustice; it is an ill-arranged compilation from

several of his manuscripts. That the extraordinary works, of which this note contains an account, have not been published entire, and in their original language, is much to be regretted by all who know how to venerate so great a genius as Lionardo da Vinci.

* The *Erotemata* of Constantine Lascaris, printed by Aldus, bears date Feb. 1494, which seems to mean 1495. But the *Musæus* has no date, nor the *Galeomyomachia*, a Greek poem by one Theodorus Prodromus. Renouard, *Hist. de l'imprimerie des Aldes*.

† The grammar of Urbano Valeriano was first printed in 1497. It is in Greek and Latin, and of extreme rarity. Roscoe (Leo X. ch. xi.) says, "it was received with such avidity that Erasmus, on in-

CHAP.
III.

editions are the Aristotle, in five volumes, the first bearing date of 1495, the last of 1498, and nine plays of Aristophanes in the latter year. In this Aristophanes, and perhaps in other editions of this time, Aldus had fortunately the assistance of Marcus Musurus, one of the last, but by no means the least eminent, of the Greeks who transported their language to Italy. Musurus was now a public teacher at Padua. John Lascaris, son, perhaps, of Constantine, edited the Anthologia at Florence. It may be doubted whether Italy had as yet produced any scholar, unless it were Varino, more often called Phavorinus, singly equal to the task of superintending a Greek edition. His Thesaurus Cornucopiæ, a collection of thirty-four grammatical tracts in Greek, printed 1496, may be an exception. The Etymologicum Magnum, Venice, 1499, being a lexicon with only Greek explanations, is supposed to be chiefly due to Musurus. Aldus had printed Craston's lexicon, in 1497, with the addition of an index; this has often been mistaken for an original work. *

Decline of
learning in
Italy.

115. The state of Italy was not so favourable as it had been to the advancement of philosophy. After the expulsion of the Medici from Florence, in 1494, the Platonic academy was broken up; and that philosophy never found again a friendly soil in Italy, though Ficinus had endeavoured to keep it up by a Latin translation of Plotinus.

quiring for it in the year 1499, found that not a copy of this impression remained unsold." I have given, a little below, a different

construction to these words of Erasmus.

* Renouard. Roscoe's Leo X., ch. xi.

Aristotle and his followers began now to regain the ascendant. Perhaps it may be thought that even polite letters were not so flourishing as they had been; no one, at least, yet appeared to fill the place of Hermolaus Barbarus, who died in 1493, or Politian, who followed him the next year.

CHAP.
III.

116. Hermolaus Barbarus was a noble Venetian, whom Europe agreed to place next to Politian in critical learning, and to draw a line between them and any third name. "No time, no accident, no destiny," says an enthusiastic scholar of the next age, "will ever efface their remembrance from the hearts of the learned." * Erasmus calls him a truly great and divine man. He filled many honourable offices for the republic; but lamented that they drew him away from that learning for which he says he was born, and to which alone he was devoted. † Yet Hermolaus is but faintly kept in mind at the present day. In his Latin style, with the same fault as Politian, an affectation of obsolete words, he is less flexible and elegant. But his chief merit was in the restoration of the text of ancient writers. He boasts that he had corrected above five thousand passages in Pliny's natural history, and more than three hundred in the very

Hermolaus
Barbarus.

* *Habuit nostra hæc ætas bonarum literarum proceres duos, Hermolaum Barbarum atque Angelum Politianum: Deum immortalem! quam acri judicio, quanta facundia, quanta linguarum, quanta disciplinarum omnium scientia præditos! Hi Latinam linguam jam pridem squalentem et multa barbariei rubigine exesam, ad pristinum revocare nitorem conati sunt, atque illis suis profecto conatus non in-*

feliciter cessit, suntque illi de Latina lingua tam bene meriti, quam qui ante eos optimi meriti fuere. Itaque immortalem sibi gloriam, immortale decus paraverunt, manebitque semper in omnium eruditorum pectoribus consecrata Hermolai et Politiani memoria, nullo ævo, nullo casu, nullo fato abolenda. Brixæus Erasmo in *Erasm. Epist.* cexii.

† *Meiners, ii. 200.*

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III.

brief geography of Pomponius Mela. Hardouin, however, charges him with extreme rashness in altering passages he did not understand. The pope had nominated Hermolaus to the greatest post in the Venetian church, the patriarchate of Aquileia; but his mortification at finding that the senate refused to concur in the appointment is said to have hastened his death.*

Mantuan.

117. A Latin poet once of great celebrity, Baptista Mantuan, seems to fall within this period as fitly as any other, though several of his poems had been separately printed before, and their collective publication was not till 1513. Editions recur very frequently in the bibliography of Italy and Germany. He was, and long continued to be, the poet of school-rooms. Erasmus says, that he would be placed by posterity not much below Virgil †; and the marquis of Mantua, anticipating this suffrage, erected their statues side by side. Such is the security of contemporary compliments! Mantuan has long been utterly neglected, and does not find a place in most selections of Latin poetry. His *Eclogues* and *Silvæ* are said to be the least bad of his numerous works. He was among the many assailants of the church, or at least the court, of Rome; and this animosity inspired him with some bitter, or rather vigorous, invectives. But he became afterwards a Carmelite

* Bayle. *Niceron*, vol. xiv. Tiraboschi, vii. 152. Corniani, iii. 197. Heeren, p. 274.

† Et nisi me fallit augurium, erit, erit aliquando Baptista suo concive gloriâ celebratæque non ita multo inferior, simul invidiam

anni detraxerint. *Append. ad* *Erasm. Epist.* cccxcv. (edit. Lugd.) It is not conceivable that Erasmus meant this literally; but the drift of the letter is to encourage the reading of Christian poets.

friar.* Marullus, a Greek by birth, has obtained a certain reputation for his Latin poems, which are of no great value. CHAP.
III.

118. A far superior name is that of Pontanus, to whom, if we attend to some critics, we must award the palm, above all Latin poets of the fifteenth century. If I might venture to set my own taste against theirs, I should not agree to his superiority over Politian. His hexameters are by no means deficient in harmony, and may, perhaps, be more correct than those of his rival, but appear to me less pleasing and poetical. His lyric poems are, like too much modern Latin, in a tone of languid voluptuousness, and ring changes on the various beauties of his mistress, and the sweetness of her kisses. The few elegies of Pontanus, among which that addressed to his wife, on the prospect of peace, is the best known, fall very short of the admirable lines of Politian on the death of Ovid. Pontanus wrote some moral and political essays in prose, which are said to be full of just observations and sharp satire on the court of Rome, and written in a style which his contemporaries regarded with admiration. They were published in 1490. Erasmus, though a parsimonious distributor of praise to the Italians, has acknowledged their merit in the Ciceronianus.†

* Corniani, iii. 148. Nicéron, vol. xxvii. Such of Mantuan's eclogues as are printed in *Carmena illustrium Poetarum Italorum*, Florent. 1719, are but indifferent. I doubt, however, whether that voluminous collection has been made with much taste; and his

satire on the see of Rome would certainly be excluded, whatever might be its merit. Corniani has given an extract, better than what I had seen of Mantuan.

† Roscoe, Leo X., ch. ii. and xx. Nicéron, vol. viii. Corniani. Tiraboschi. Pontanus cum illa quatuor

CHAP.
III.Neapolitan
academy.

119. Pontanus presided at this time over the Neapolitan Academy, a dignity which he had attained upon the death of Beccatelli, in 1471. This was, after the decline of the Roman and the Florentine, by far the most eminent reunion of literary men in Italy; and though it was long conspicuous, seems to have reached its highest point in the last years of this century, under the patronage of the mild Frederic of Aragon, and during that transient calm which Naples was permitted to enjoy between the invasions of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. That city and kingdom afforded many lovers of learning and poetry; some of them in the class of its nobles; each district being, as it were, represented in this academy by one or more of its distinguished residents. But other members were associated from different parts of Italy; and the whole constellation of names is still brilliant, though some have grown dim by time. The house of Este, at Ferrara, were still the liberal patrons of genius; none more eminently than their reigning marquis, Hercules I. And not less praise is due to the families who held the principalities of Urbino and Mantua.*

Boiardo.

120. A poem now appeared in Italy, well de-

complecti summa cura conatus sit, nervum dico, numeros, candorem, venustatem, profecto est omnia consecutus. Quintum autem illud quod est horum omnium veluti vita quædam, modum intelligo, penitus ignoravit. Aiunt Virgilium cum multos versus matutino calore effudisset, pomeridianis horis novo judicio solitum ad paucorum numerum revocare. Contra

quidem Pontano evenisse arbitror. Quæ prima quaque inventione arisissent, iis plura postea, dum recognosceret, addita, atque ipsis potius carminibus, quam sibi perpercisse. Scaliger de re poetica (apud Blount).

* Roscoe's Leo X., ch. ii. This contains an excellent account of the state of literature in Italy about the close of the century.

serving of attention for its own sake, but still more so on account of the excitement and direction it gave to one of the most famous poets that ever lived. Matteo Maria Boiardo, count of Scandiano, a man esteemed and trusted at the court of Ferrara, amused his leisure in the publication of a romantic poem, for which the stories of Charlemagne and his paladins, related by one who assumed the name of Turpin, and already woven into long metrical narrations, current at the end of the fourteenth and during the fifteenth century in Italy, supplied materials, which are almost lost in the original inventions of the author. The first edition of this poem is without date, but probably in 1495. The author, who died the year before, left it unfinished at the ninth canto of the third book. Agostini, in 1516, published a continuation, indifferently executed, in three more books; but the real complement of the *Innamorato* is the *Furioso*.* The *Orlando Innamorato* of Boiardo has hitherto not received that share of renown which seems to be its due; overpowered by the splendour of Ariosto's poem, and almost set aside in its original form by the improved edition or remaking (*rifaccimento*), which Berni afterwards gave, it has rarely been sought or quoted, even in Italy.†

* Fontanini, dell' eloquenza Italiana, edit. di Zeno, p. 270.

† See my friend Mr. Panizzi's excellent introduction to his edition of the *Orlando Innamorato*. This poem had never been reprinted since 1544; so much was

Roscoe deceived in fancying that "the simplicity of the original has caused it to be preferred to the same work, as altered or reformed by Francesco Berni." *Life of Leo X.*, ch. ii.

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III.

The style is uncouth and hard; but without style, which is the source of perpetual delight, no long poem will be read; and it has been observed by Ginguéné with some justice, that Boiardo's name is better remembered, though his original poem may have been more completely neglected, through the process to which Berni has subjected it. In point of novel invention and just keeping of character, especially the latter, he has not been surpassed by his illustrious follower Ariosto; and whatever of this we find in the Orlando Innamorato, is due to Boiardo alone; for Berni has preserved the sense of almost every stanza. The imposing appearance of Angelica at the court of Charlemagne, in the first canto, opens the poem with a splendour rarely equalled, with a luxuriant fertility of invention, and with admirable art; judiciously presenting the subject in so much singleness, that amidst all the intricacies and episodes of the story, the reader never forgets the incomparable princess of Albracca. The latter city, placed in that remote Cathay which Marco Polo had laid open to the range of fancy, and its siege by Agri-can's innumerable cavalry, are creations of Boiardo's most inventive mind. Nothing in Ariosto is conceived so nobly, or so much in the true genius of romance. Castelvetro asserts that the names Gradasso, Mandricardo, Sobrino, and others which Boiardo has given to his imaginary characters, belonged to his own peasants of Scandiano; and some have improved upon this by assuring us, that those who take the pains to ascertain the fact, may still find the representatives of these sonorous

heroes at the plough, which, if the story were true, ought to be the case.* But we may give him credit for talent enough to invent those appellations; he hardly found an Albracca on his domains; and those who grudge him the rest, acknowledge that, in a moment of inspiration, while hunting, the name of Rodomont occurred to his mind. We know how finely Milton, whose ear pursued, almost to excess, the pleasure of harmonious names, and who loved to expatiate in these imaginary regions, has alluded to Boiardo's poem in the *Paradise Regained*. The lines are perhaps the most musical he has ever produced.

Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphron, from thence to win
The fairest of her sex Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both paynim and the peers of Charlemagne.†

121. The *Mambriano* of Francesco Bello, sir-
named *il Cieco*, another poem of the same romantic
class, was published posthumously in 1497. Apos-
tolo Zeno, as quoted by Roscoe, attributes the neg-
lect of the *Mambriano* to its wanting an Ariosto to
continue its subject, or a Berni to reform its style.‡
But this seems a capricious opinion. Bello com-

Francesco
Bello.

* Camillo Pellegrino, in his famous controversy with the Academy of Florence on the respective merits of Ariosto and Tasso, having asserted this, they do not deny the fact, but say it stands on the authority of Castelvetro. *Opere di Tasso*, 4to, ii. 94. The critics held rather a pedantic doctrine; that though the names of private men may be feigned, the poet has no right to introduce things unknown to history, as this destroys the probability required for his fiction.

† Book iii.
‡ Leo X., ch. ii.

CHAP.
III.

posed it at intervals to amuse the courtiers of the marquis of Mantua. The poem, therefore, wants unity. "It is a reunion," says Mr. Panizzi, "of detached tales, without any relation to each other, except in so far as most of the same actors are before us."* We may perceive by this, how little a series of rhapsodies, not directed by a controlling unity of purpose, even though the work of a single man, are likely to fall into a connected poem. But that a long poem, of singular coherence and subordination of parts to an end, should be framed from the random and insulated songs of a great number of persons, is almost as incredible as that the annals of Ennius, to use Cicero's argument against the fortuitous origin of the world, should be formed by shaking together the letters of the alphabet.

Italian
poetry near
the end of
the century.

122. Near the close of the fifteenth century we find a great increase of Italian poetry, to which the patronage and example of Lorenzo had given encouragement. It is not easy to place within such narrow limits as a decennial period, the names of writers whose productions were frequently not published, at least collectively, during their lives. Serafino d'Aquila, born in 1466, seems to fall, as a poet, within this decad; and the same may be said of Tibaldeo and Benivieni. Of these the first is perhaps the best known; his verses are not destitute of spirit, but extravagance and bad taste

* Panizzi's Introduction to Boiardo, p. 360. He does not highly praise the poem, of which he gives

an analysis with extracts. See too Ginguéné, vol. iv.

deform the greater part.* Tibaldeo unites false thoughts with rudeness and poverty of diction. Benivieni, superior to either of these, is reckoned by Corniani a link between the harshness of the fifteenth and the polish of the ensuing century. The style of this age was far from the grace and sweetness of Petrarch; forced in sentiment, low in choice of words, deficient in harmony, it has been condemned by the voice of all Italian critics.†

123. A greater activity than before was now perceptible in the literary spirit of France and Germany. It was also regularly progressive. The press of Paris gave twenty-six editions of ancient Latin authors, nine of which were in the year 1500. Twelve were published at Lyons. Deventer and Leipsic, especially the latter, which now took a lead in the German press, bore a part in this honourable labour; a proof of the rapid and extensive influence of Conrad Celtes on that part of Germany. It is to be understood that a very large proportion, or nearly the whole, of the Latin editions printed in Germany were for the use of schools.‡ We should be warranted in drawing an inference as to the progress in literary instruction in these countries from the increase in the number of publications, small as that number still is, and

Progress of
learning in
France and
Germany.

* Bouterwek, *Gesch. der Ital. Poesie*, i. 321. Corniani.

† Corniani. Muratori, *della perfetta Poesia*. Crescimbeni, *Storia della volgar poesia*.

‡ A proof of this may be found in the books printed at Deventer from 1491 to 1500. They consisted of Virgil's *Bucolics* three times, Virgil's *Georgics* twice, and the *eclogues* of Calpurnius once,

or perhaps twice. At Leipsic the list is much longer, but in great measure of the same kind; single treatises of Seneca or Cicero, or detached parts of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, sometimes very short, as the *Culex* or the *Ibis*, form, with not many exceptions, the Cisalpine classical bibliography of the fifteenth century.

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III.

trifling as some of them may appear. It may be accounted for by the gradual working of the schools at Munster and other places, which had now sent out a race of pupils well fitted to impart knowledge in their turn to others; and by the patronage of some powerful men, among whom the first place, on all accounts, is due to the emperor Maximilian. Nothing was so likely to contribute to the intellectual improvement of Germany as the public peace of 1495, which put an end to the barbarous customs of the middle ages, not unaccompanied by generous virtues, but certainly as incompatible with the steady cultivation of literature, as with riches and repose. Yet there seems to be no proof that the Greek language had obtained much more attention; no book connected with it is recorded to have been printed, and I do not find mention that it was taught, even superficially, in any university or school, at this time, though it might be conjectured without improbability. Reuchlin had now devoted his whole thoughts to cabbalistic philosophy, and the study of Hebrew; and Eichhorn, though not unwilling to make the most of early German learning, owns that, at the end of the century, no other person had become remarkable for a skill in Greek.*

* Eichhorn, iii. 236. This section in Eichhorn is valuable, but not without some want of precision.

Reuchlin had been very diligent in purchasing Greek manuscripts. But these were very scarce, even in Italy. A correspondent of his, Streler by name, one of the young men who went from Germany to Florence for education,

tells him, in 1491: *Nullos libros Græcos hic venales reperio*; and again, *de Græcis libris coemendis hoc scias*; *fui penes omnes hic librarios, nihil horum prorsus reperio*. *Epist. ad Reuchl.* (1562) fol. 7. In fact, Reuchlin's own library was so large as to astonish the Italian scholars when they saw the catalogue, who plainly owned they could not procure such books

124. Two men, however, were devoting incessant labour to the acquisition of that language at Paris, for whom was reserved the glory of raising the knowledge of it in cisalpine Europe to a height which Italy could not attain. These were Erasmus and Budæus. The former, who had acquired as a boy the mere rudiments of Greek under Hegius at Deventer, set himself in good earnest to that study about 1499, hiring a teacher at Paris, old Hermonymus of Sparta, of whose extortion he complains; but he was little able to pay any thing; and his noble endurance of privations for the sake of knowledge deserved the high reward of glory it received. "I have given my whole soul," he says, "to Greek learning, and as soon as I get any money I shall first buy Greek books and then clothes."* "If any new Greek book comes to hand, I would rather pledge my cloak than not obtain it; especially if it be religious, such as a psalter or a gospel."† It will be remembered, that the books of which he speaks must have been frequently manuscripts.

CHAP.
III.

Erasmus;

his diligence.

125. Budæus, in his proper name Budé, nearly of the same age as Erasmus, had relinquished every occupation for intense labour in literature. In an

Budæus;
his early studies.

themselves. They had of course been originally purchased in Italy, unless we suppose some to have been brought by way of Hungary.

It is not to be imagined that the libraries of ordinary scholars were to be compared with that of Reuchlin, probably more opulent than most of them. The early printed books of Italy, even the most indispensable, were very scarce, at

least in France. A Greek grammar was a rarity at Paris in 1499. *Grammaticen Græcam*, says Erasmus to a correspondent, *summo studio vestigavi, ut emptam tibi mitterem, sed jam utraque vendita fuerat, et Constantini quæ dicitur, quæque Urbani*. Epist. lix. See too Epist. lxxiii.

* Epist. xxix.

† Epist. lviii.

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III.

interesting letter, addressed to Cuthbert Tunstall in 1517, giving an account of his own early studies, he says that he learned Greek very ill from a bad master at Paris, in 1491. This was certainly Hermonymus, of whom Reuchlin speaks more favourably; but he was not quite so competent a judge.* Some years afterwards Budæus got much better instruction; "ancient literature having derived within a few years great improvement in France by our intercourse with Italy, and by the importation of books in both the learned languages." Lascaris, who now lived at the court of Charles VIII., having returned with him from the Neapolitan expedition, gave Budæus some assistance, though not, according to the latter's biographer, to any great extent.

Latin not
well written
in France.

126. France had as yet no writer of Latin, who could be endured in comparison with those of Italy. Robert Gaguin praises Fichet, rector of the Sorbonne, as learned and eloquent, and the first who had taught many to employ good language in Latin. The more certain glory of Fichet is to

* Hody (de Græcis illustribus, p. 238.) thinks that the master of Budæus could not have been Hermonymus; probably because the praise of Reuchlin seemed to him incompatible with the contemptuous language of Budæus. But Erasmus is very explicit on this subject. Ad Græcas literas utcumque puero degustatas jam grandior redii; hoc est, annos natus plus minus triginta, sed tum cum apud nos nulla Græcorum codicum esset copia, neque minor penuria doctorum. Lutetiæ tantum unus Georgius Hermonymus Græcè

balbutiebat; sed talis, ut neque potuisset docere si voluisset, neque voluisset si potuisset. Itaque coactus ipse mihi præceptor esse, &c. (A. D. 1524.) I transcribe from Jortin, ii. 419. Of Hermonymus it is said by Beatus Rhenanus in a letter to Reuchlin, that he was non tam doctrina quam patria clarus. (Epist. ad Reuchl. fol. 52.) Roy, in his Life of Budæus, says, that the latter, having paid Hermonymus 500 gold pieces, and read Homer and other books with him, nihilo doctior est factus.

have introduced the art of printing into France. Gaguin himself enjoyed a certain reputation for his style, and his epistles have been printed. He possessed at least, what is most important, a love of knowledge, and an elevated way of thinking. But Erasmus says of him, that "whatever he might have been in his own age, he would now scarcely be reckoned to write Latin at all." If we could rely on a panegyrist of Faustus Andrelinus, an Italian who came about 1489 to Paris, and was authorised, in conjunction with one Balbi, and with Cornelio Vitelli, to teach in the university*, he was the man who brought polite literature into France, and changed its barbarism for classical purity. But Andrelinus, who is best known as a Latin poet of by no means a high rank, seems not to merit this commendation. Whatever his capacities of teaching may have been, we have little evidence of his success. Yet the number of editions of Latin authors published in France during this decad proves some diffusion of classical learning; and we must admit the circumstance to be quite decisive of the inferiority of England.

127. A gleam of light, however, now broke out there. We have seen already that a few, even in the last years of Henry VI., had overcome all obstacles in order to drink at the fountain-head of pure learning in Italy. One or two more names might be added for the intervening period; Milling, abbot of

Dawn of
Greek
learning in
England.

* This I find quoted in Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d' Italia*, i. 250. See also Bayle, and *Biogr. Univ.*, art. Andrelini. They were only

allowed to teach for one hour in the evening; the jealousy of the logicians not having subsided. Crevier, iv. 439.

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III.

Westminster, and Selling, prior of a convent at Canterbury.* It is reported by Polydore Virgil, and is proved by Wood, that Cornelio Vitelli, an Italian, came to Oxford about 1488, in order to give that most barbarous university some notion of what was going forward on the other side of the Alps; and it has been probably conjectured, or rather may be assumed, that he there imparted the rudiments of Greek to William Grocyn.† It is certain, at least, that Grocyn had acquired some insight into that language, before he took a better course, and, travelling into Italy, became the disciple of Chalcondyles and Politian. He returned home in 1491, and began to communicate his acquisitions, though chiefly to deaf ears, teaching in Exeter College at Oxford. A diligent emula-

* Warton, iii. 247. Johnson's Life of Linacre, p. 5. This is mentioned on Selling's monument now remaining in Canterbury cathedral.

Doctor theologus Selling Græca
atque Latina
Lingua perdoctus.

Selling, however, did not go to Italy till after 1480, far from returning in 1460, as Warton has said, with his usual indifference to anachronisms.

† Polydore says nothing about Vitelli's teaching Greek, though Knight in his Life of Colet, translates *bonæ literæ*, "Greek and Latin." But the following passages seem decisive as to Grocyn's early studies in the Greek language. Grocynus, qui prima Græcæ et Latinæ linguæ rudimenta in Britannia hausit, mox solidiorem iisdem operam sub Demetrio Chalcondyle et Politiano præceptoribus in Italia

hausit. Lilly, *Elogia virorum doctorum*, in Knight's Life of Colet, p. 24. And Erasmus as positively: Ipse Grocynus, cujus exemplum affert, nonne primum in Anglia Græcæ linguæ rudimenta didicit? Post in Italiam profectus audivit summos viros, sed interim lucro fuit illa prius a qualibuscunque didicisse. Epist. ccclxiii. Whether the *qualescunque* were Vitelli or any one else, this can leave no doubt as to the existence of some Greek instruction in England before Grocyn; and as no one can be suggested, so far as appears, except Vitelli, it seems reasonable to fix upon him as the first preceptor of Grocyn. Vitelli had returned to Paris in 1489, and taught in the university, as has just been mentioned; so that he could have little time, if Polydore's date of 1488 be right, of giving much instruction at Oxford.

tor of Grocyn, but some years younger, and like him, a pupil of Politian and Hermolaus, was Thomas Linacre, a physician; but though a first edition of his translation of Galen has been supposed to have been printed at Venice in 1498, it seems to be ascertained that none preceded that of Cambridge in 1521. His only contribution to literature in the fifteenth century was a translation of the very short mathematical treatise of Proclus on the sphere, published in a volume of ancient writers on astronomy, by Aldus Manutius, in 1499.*

128. Erasmus paid his first visit to England in 1497, and was delighted with every thing that he found, especially at Oxford. In an epistle dated Dec. 5th, after praising Grocyn, Colet, and Linacre to the skies, he says of Thomas More, who could not then have been eighteen years old, "What mind was ever framed by nature more gentle, more pleasing, more gifted? — It is incredible, what a treasure of old books is found here far and wide. — There is so much erudition, not of a vulgar and ordinary kind, but recondite, accurate, ancient, both Latin and Greek, that you would seek any thing in Italy but the pleasure of travelling."† But this letter is addressed to an Englishman, and the praise is evidently much exaggerated; the

Erasmus
comes to
England.

* Johnson's Life of Linacre, p. 152.

† Thomæ Mori ingenio quid unquam finxit natura vel mollius, vel dulcius, vel felicius? . . . Mirum est dictu, quam hic passim, quam dense veterum librorum seges ef-

florescat . . . tantum eruditionis non illius protritæ ac trivialis, sed reconditæ, exactæ, antiquæ, Latinæ Græcæque, ut jam Italiam nisi visendi gratia non multum desideres. Epist. xiv.

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III.

scholars were few, and not more than three or four could be found, or at least could now be mentioned, who had any tincture of Greek,—Grocyn, Linacre, William Latimer, who, though an excellent scholar, never published any thing, and More, who had learned at Oxford under Grocyn.* It should here be added, that, in 1497, Terence was printed by Pynson, being the first edition of a strictly classical author in England; though Boethius had already appeared with Latin and English on opposite pages.

He publishes his
Adages.

129. In 1500 was printed at Paris the first edition of Erasmus's Adages, doubtless the chief prose work of this century beyond the limits of Italy; but this edition should, if possible, be procured, in order to judge with chronological exactness of the state of literature; for as his general knowledge of antiquity, and particularly of Greek, which was now very slender, increased, he made vast additions. The Adages, which were now about eight hundred, amounted in his last edition to 4151; not that he could find so many which properly deserve that name, but the number is made up by explanations of Latin and Greek idioms, or even of single words. He declares himself, as early as 1504, ashamed of the first edition of his Adages,

* A letter of Colet to Erasmus from Oxford in 1497, is written in the style of a man who was conversant with the best Latin authors. Sir Thomas More's birth has not been placed by any biographer earlier than 1480.

It has been sometimes asserted, on the authority of Antony Wood, that Erasmus taught Greek at

Oxford; but there is no foundation for this, and in fact he did not know enough of the language. Knight, on the other hand, maintains that he learned it there under Grocyn and Linacre; but this rests on no evidence; and we have seen that he gives a different account of his studies in Greek. *Life of Erasmus*, p. 22.

which already seemed meagre and imperfect.* Erasmus had been preceded in some measure by Polydore Virgil, best known as the historian of this country, where he resided many years as collector of papal dues. He published a book of adages, which must have been rather a juvenile, and is a superficial production, at Venice in 1498.

CHAP.
III.

130. The Castilian poets of the fifteenth century have been collectively mentioned on a former occasion. Bouterwek refers to the latter part of this age most of the romances, which turn upon Saracen story, and the adventures of "knights of Granada, gentlemen, though Moors." Sismondi follows him without, perhaps, much reflection, and endeavours to explain what he might have doubted. Fear having long ceased in the bosoms of the Castilian Christians, even before conquest had set its seal to their security, hate, the child of fear, had grown feebler; and the romancers felt themselves at liberty to expatiate in the rich field of Mohammedan customs and manners. These had already exercised a considerable influence over Spain. But this opinion seems hard to be supported; nor do I find that the Spanish critics claim so much antiquity for the Moorish class of romantic ballads. Most of them, it is acknowledged, belong to the sixteenth, and some to the seventeenth century; and the internal evidence is against their having been written before the Moorish wars had become matter of distant tradition. We shall therefore take no notice of the Spanish romance-ballads till

Romantic
ballads of
Spain.

* Epist. cii., jejunum atque inops videri cœpit, posteaquam Græcos colui auctores.

CHAP.
III.Pastoral
romances.

we come to the age of Philip II., to which they principally belong.*

131. Bouterwek places in this decad the first specimens of the pastoral romance which the Castilian language affords.† But the style is borrowed from a neighbouring part of the peninsula, where this species of fiction seems to have been indigenous. The Portuguese nation cultivated poetry as early as the Castilian; and we have seen that some remains of a date anterior to the fourteenth century. But to the heroic romance they seem to have paid no regard; we do not find that it ever existed among them. Love chiefly occupied the Lusitanian muse; and to trace that passion through all its labyrinths, to display its troubles in a strain of languid melancholy, was the great aim of every poet. This led to the invention of pastoral romances, founded on the ancient traditions as to the felicity of shepherds and their proneness to love, and rendered sometimes more interesting for the time by the introduction of real characters and events under a slight disguise.‡ This artificial and effeminate sort of composition, which, if it may now and then be not unpleasing, cannot fail to weary the modern reader by its monotony, is due to Portugal, and having been adopted in languages better known, became for a long time highly popular in Europe.

Portuguese
lyric poetry.

132. The lyrical poems of Portugal were collected by Garcia de Resende, in the Cancioneiro

* Bouterwek, p. 121. Sismondi,
iii. 222. Romances Moriscos,
Madr. 1828.

† P. 123.
‡ Bouterwek's Hist. of Portu-
guese Literature, p. 43.

Geral, published in 1516. Some few of these are of the fourteenth century, for we find the name of king Pedro, who died in 1369. Others are by the Infant Don Pedro, son of John I., in the earlier part of the fifteenth. But a greater number belong nearly to the present or preceding decad, or even to the ensuing age, commemorating the victories of the Portuguese in Asia. This collection is of extreme scarcity; none of the historians of Portuguese literature have seen it. Bouterwek and Sismondi declare that they have caused search to be made in various libraries of Europe without success. There is, however, a copy in the British Museum; and M. Raynouard has given a short account of one that he had seen in the *Journal des Savans* for 1826. In this article he observes, that the *Cancioneiro* is a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish pieces. I believe, however, that very little Spanish will be found, with the exception of the poems of the Infante Pedro, which occupy some leaves. The whole number of poets is but one hundred and thirty-two, even if some names do not occur twice; which I mention, because it has been erroneously said to exceed considerably that of the Spanish *Cancioneiro*. The volume is in folio, and contains two hundred and twenty-seven leaves. The metres are those usual in Spanish; some *versos de arte mayor*; but the greater part in trochaic redondillas. I observed no instance of the assonant rhyme; but there are several glosses, or, in the Portuguese word, *grosas*.* The chief

* Bouterwek, p. 30., has observed, that the Portuguese employ the *glosa*, calling it *volta*. The word in the *Cancioneiro* is *grosa*.

CHAP.
III.German
popular
books.

part is amatory ; but there are lines on the death of kings, and other political events.*

133. The Germans, if they did not as yet excel in the higher department of typography, were by no means negligent of their own great invention. The books, if we include the smallest, printed in the empire between 1470 and the close of the century, amount to several thousand editions. A large proportion of these were in their own language. They had a literary public, as we may call it, not merely in their courts and universities, but in their respectable middle class, the burghers of the free cities, and, perhaps, in the artizans whom they employed. Their reading was almost always with a serious end ; but no people so successfully cultivated the art of moral and satirical fable. These, in many instances, spread with great favour through cisalpine Europe. Among the works of this kind, in the fifteenth century, two deserve mention ; the *Eulenspiegel*, or *Mirror of Owls*, popular afterwards in England by the name of *Howlenglass*, and a superior and better known production, the *Narrenschiff*, or *Ship of Fools*, by Sebastian Brandt of Strasburg, the first edition of which I do not find referred to any date ; but the Latin translation appeared at Lyons in 1488. It was translated into English by Barclay, and published early in 1509. It is a metrical satire on the follies of every class, and may pos-

* A manuscript collection of Portuguese lyric poetry of the fifteenth century belonged to Mr. Heber, and was sold to Messrs. Payne and Foss. It would pro-

bably be found on comparison to contain many of the pieces in the *Cancioneiro Geral*, but it is not a copy of it.

sibly have suggested to Erasmus his *Encomium Moriæ*. But the idea was not absolutely new; the theatrical company established at Paris, under the name of *Enfans de San Souci*, as well as the ancient office of jester or fool in our courts and castles, implied the same principle of satirising mankind with ridicule so general, that every man should feel more pleasure from the humiliation of his neighbours, than pain from his own. Brandt does not show much poetical talent; but his morality is clear and sound; he keeps the pure and right-minded reader on his side; and in an age when little better came into competition, his characters of men, though more didactic than descriptive, did not fail to please. The influence such books of simple fiction and plain moral would possess over a people, may be judged by the delight they once gave to children, before we had learned to vitiate the healthy appetite of ignorance by premature refinements and stimulating variety.*

134. The historical literature of this century presents very little deserving of notice. The English writers of this class are absolutely contemptible; and if some annalists of good sense and tolerable skill in narration may be found on the continent, they are not conspicuous enough to arrest our regard in a work which designedly passes over that department of literature, so far as it is merely conversant with particular events.

Historical
works.

* Bouterwek, ix. 332—354. v. 113. Heinsius, iv. 113. Warton, iii. 74.

CHAP.
III.Ph. de
Comines.

But the memoirs of Philip de Comines, which, though not published till 1529, must have been written before the close of the fifteenth century, are not only of a higher value, but almost make an epoch in historical literature. If Froissart, by his picturesque descriptions, and fertility of historical *invention*, may be reckoned the Livy of France, she had her Tacitus in Philip de Comines. The intermediate writers, Monstrelet and his continuators, have the merits of neither, certainly not of Comines. He is the first modern writer (or, if there had been any approach to an exception among the Italians, it has escaped my recollection) who in any degree has displayed sagacity in reasoning on the characters of men, and the consequences of their actions, or who has been able to generalise his observation by comparison and reflection. Nothing of this could have been found in the cloister; nor were the philologers of Italy equal to a task which required capacities and pursuits very different from their own. An acute understanding and much experience of mankind gave Comines this superiority; his life had not been spent over books; and he is consequently free from that pedantic application of history, which became common with those who passed for political reasoners in the next two centuries. Yet he was not ignorant of former times; and we see the advantage of those translations from antiquity, made during the last hundred years in France, by the use to which he turned them.

Algebra.

135. The earliest printed treatise of algebra,

for that of Leonard Fibonacci is still in manuscript, was published in 1494, by Luca Pacioli di Borgo, a Franciscan, who taught mathematics in the university of Milan. This book is written in Italian, with a mixture of the Venetian dialect, and with many Latin words. In the first part, he explains the rules of commercial arithmetic in detail, and is the earliest Italian writer who shows the principles of Italian book-keeping by double entry. Algebra he calls *l' arte maggiore, detta dal volgo la regola de la cosa*, over *alghebra e almacabala*, which last he explains by *restauratio et oppositio*. The known number is called *n°* or *numero*; *co.* or *cosa* stands for the unknown quantity; whence algebra was sometimes called the *cossic art*. In the early Latin treatises *Res* is used, or *R.*, which is an approach to literal expression. The square is called *censo* or *ce.*; the cube, *cubo* or *cu.*; *p.* and *m.* stand for *plus* and *minus*. Thus, *3co. p. 4ce. m. 5cu. p. 2ce.ce. m. 6n°* would have been written for what would now be expressed $3x + 4x^2 - 5x^3 + 2x^4 - 6$. Luca di Borgo's algebra goes as far as quadratic equations; but though he had very good notions on the subject, it does not appear that he carried the science much beyond the point where Leonard Fibonacci had left it three centuries before. And its principles were already familiar to mathematicians; for Regiomontanus, having stated a trigonometrical solution in the form of a quadratic equation, adds, *quod restat, præcepta artis edocébunt*. Luca di Borgo perceived, in a certain sense, the application of algebra to geometry, observing,

CHAP.
III.Events
from 1490
to 1500.

that the rules as to surd roots are referrible to incommensurable magnitudes.*

136. This period of ten years from 1490 to 1500, will ever be memorable in the history of mankind. It is here that we usually close the long interval between the Roman world and this our modern Europe, denominated the Middle Ages. The conquest of Granada, which rendered Spain a Christian kingdom; the annexation of the last great fief of the French crown, Britany, which made France an entire and absolute monarchy; the public peace of Germany; the invasion of Naples by Charles VIII., which revealed the weakness of Italy, while it communicated her arts and manners to the cisalpine nations, and opened the scene of warfare and alliances which may be deduced to the present day; the discovery of two worlds by Columbus and Vasco de Gama, all belong to this decad. But it is not, as we have seen, so marked an era in the progression of literature.

Close of
fifteenth
century.

137. In taking leave of the fifteenth century, to which we have been used to attach many associations of reverence, and during which the desire of knowledge was, in one part of Europe, more enthusiastic and universal than perhaps it has since ever been, it is natural to ask ourselves, what harvest had already rewarded their zeal and labour, what

* Montucla. Kästner. Cossali. Hutton's Mathem. Dict., art. Algebra. The last writer, and perhaps the first, had never seen the book of Luca Pacioli.

Mr. Colebrooke, in his Indian Algebra, has shown that the Hindoos carried that science consi-

derably farther than either the Greeks or the Arabians, (though he thinks they may probably have derived their notions of the science from the former) anticipating some of the discoveries of the sixteenth century.

monuments of genius and erudition still receive the homage of mankind?

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138. No very triumphant answer can be given to this interrogation. Of the books then written how few are read! Of the men then famous how few are familiar in our recollection! Let us consider what Italy itself produced of any effective tendency to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge, or to delight the taste and fancy. The treatise of Valla on Latin grammar, the miscellaneous observations of Politian on ancient authors, the commentaries of Landino and some other editors, the Platonic theology of Ficinus, the Latin poetry of Politian and Pontanus, the light Italian poetry of the same Politian and Lorenzo de' Medici, the epic romances of Pulci and Boiardo. Of these, Pulci alone, in an original shape, is still read in Italy, and by some lovers of that literature in other countries, and the Latin poets by a smaller number. If we look on the other side of the Alps, the catalogue is much shorter, or rather does not contain a single book, except Philip de Comines, that enters into the usual studies of a literary man. Froissart hardly belongs to the fifteenth century, his history terminating about 1400. The first undated edition, with a continuation by some one to 1498, was printed between that time and 1509, when the second appeared.

Its literature nearly neglected.

139. If we come to inquire, what acquisitions had been made between the years 1400 and 1500, we shall find that, in Italy, the Latin language was now written by some with elegance, and by most with tolerable exactness and fluency; while,

Summary of its acquisitions.

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III.

out of Italy, there had been, perhaps, a corresponding improvement, relatively to the point from which they started ; the flagrant barbarisms of the fourteenth century having yielded before the close of the next to a more respectable, though not an elegant or exact kind of style. Many Italians had now some acquaintance with Greek, which in 1400 had been hardly the case with any one ; and the knowledge of it was of late beginning to make a little progress in cisalpine Europe. The French and English languages were become what we call more polished, though the difference in the former seems not to be very considerable. In mathematical science, and in natural history, the ancient writers had been more brought to light, and a certain progress had been made by diligent, if not very inventive philosophers. We cannot say that metaphysical or moral philosophy stood higher than it had done in the time of the schoolmen. The history of Greece and Rome, and the antiquities of the latter, were, of course, more distinctly known after so many years of attentive study bestowed on their principal authors ; yet the acquaintance of the learned with those subjects was by no means exact or critical enough to save them from gross errors, or from becoming the dupes of any forgery. A proof of this was furnished by the impostures of Anniius of Viterbo, who, having published large fragments of Megasthenes, Berossus, Manetho, and a great many more lost historians, as having been discovered by himself, obtained full credence at the time, which was not generally withheld for too long a period after-

wards, though the forgeries were palpable to those who had made themselves masters of genuine history.*

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140. We should, therefore, if we mean to judge accurately, not over-value the fifteenth century, as one in which the human mind advanced with giant strides in the kingdom of knowledge. General historians of literature are apt to speak rather hyperbolically in respect of men who rose above their contemporaries; language frequently just, in relation to the vigorous intellects and ardent industry of such men, but tending to produce an exaggerated estimate of their absolute qualities. But the question is at present not so much of men, as of the average or general proficiency of nations. The catalogues of printed books in the common bibliographical collections afford, not quite a gage of the learning of any particular period, but a reasonable presumption, which it requires contrary evidence to rebut. If these present us very few and imperfect editions of books necessary to the progress of knowledge, if the works most in request appear to have been trifling and ignorant productions, it seems as reasonable to draw an inference one way from these scanty and discreditable lists, as on the other hand we hail the progressive state of any branch of knowledge from the redoubled labours of the press, and the multiplication of useful

Their im-
perfection.

* Annus of Viterbo did not cease to have believers after this time. See Blount, *Niceron*, vol. ii., Corniani, iii. 131., and his article in *Biographie Universelle*. Apostolo Zeno and Tiraboschi have

imputed less fraud than credulity to Annus, but most have been of another opinion; and it is unimportant for the purpose of the text.

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editions. It is true that the deficiency of one country might be supplied by importation from another ; and some cities, especially Paris, had acquired a typographical reputation somewhat disproportioned to the local demand for books ; but a considerable increase of readers would naturally have created a press, or multiplied its operations, in any country of Europe.

Number
of books
printed.

141. The bibliographies, indeed, even the best and latest, are always imperfect ; but the omissions, after the immense pains bestowed on the subject, can hardly be such as to affect our general conclusions. We will therefore illustrate the literary history of the fifteenth century by a few numbers taken from the typographical annals of Panzer, which might be corrected in two ways ; first, by adding editions since brought to light, or secondly, by striking out some inserted on defective authority ; a kind of mistake which tends to compensate the former. The books printed at Florence down to 1500 are 300 ; at Milan, 629 ; at Bologna, 298 ; at Rome, 925 ; at Venice, 2835 ; fifty other Italian cities had printing presses in the fifteenth century.* At Paris, the number of books is 751 ; at Cologne, 530 ; at Nuremberg, 382 ; at Leipsic, 351 ; at Basle, 320 ; at Strasburg, 526 ; at Augsburg, 256 ; at Louvain, 116 ; at Mentz, 134 ; at Deventer, 169. The whole number printed in England appears to be 141 ; whereof 130 at London and Westminster ; seven at Oxford ; four at St. Alban's. Cicero's works were first printed

* I find this in Heeren, p. 127., for I have not counted the number of cities in Panzer.

entire by Minutianus, at Milan, in 1498 ; but no less than 291 editions of different portions appeared in the century. Thirty-seven of these bear date on this side of the Alps ; and forty-five have no place named. Of ninety-five editions of Virgil, seventy are complete ; twenty-seven are cisalpine, and four bear no date. On the other hand, only eleven out of fifty-seven editions of Horace contain all his works. It has been already shown, that most editions of classics printed in France and Germany are in the last decennium of the century.

142. The editions of the Vulgate registered in Panzer are ninety-one, exclusive of some spurious or suspected. Next to theology, no science furnished so much occupation to the press as the civil and canon laws. The editions of the digest and decretals, or other parts of those systems of jurisprudence, must amount to some hundreds.

Advantages
already
reaped from
printing.

143. But while we avoid, for the sake of truth, any undue exaggeration of the literary state of Europe at the close of the fifteenth century, we must even more earnestly deprecate the hasty prejudice, that no good had been already done by the culture of classical learning, and by the invention of printing. Both were of inestimable value, even where their immediate fruits were not clustering in ripe abundance. It is certain that much more than ten thousand editions of books or pamphlets (a late writer says fifteen thousand*) were printed

* Santander, Dict. Bibliogr. du 15^{me} siècle. I do not think so many would be found in Panzer. I have read somewhere that the library of Munich claims to possess 20,000 Incunabala, or books

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III.

from 1470 to 1500. More than half the number appeared in Italy. All the Latin authors, hitherto painfully copied by the scholar, or purchased by him at inconvenient cost, or borrowed for a time from friends, became readily accessible, and were printed, for the most part, if not correctly, according to our improved criticism, yet without the gross blunders of the ordinary manuscripts. The saving of time which the art of printing has occasioned, can hardly be too highly appreciated. Nor was the cisalpine press unserviceable in this century, though it did not pour forth so much from the stores of ancient learning. It gave useful food, and such as the reader could better relish and digest. The historical records of his own nation, the precepts of moral wisdom, the regular metre, that pleased the ear and supplied the memory, the fictions that warmed the imagination, and sometimes ennobled or purified the heart, the repertoires of natural phenomena, mingled as truth was on these subjects, and on all the rest, with error, the rules of civil and canon law, that guided the determinations of private right, the subtle philosophy of the scholastics, were laid open to his choice, while his religious feelings might find their gratification in many a treatise of learned doctrine, according to the received creed of the church, in many a legend on which a pious credulity delighted to rely, in the devout aspirations

of the fifteenth century: a word lately so applied in Germany. But unless this comprehends many duplicates, it seems a little question-

able. Books were not in general so voluminous in that age as at present.

of holy ascetic men ; but, above all, in the Scriptures themselves, either in the Vulgate Latin, which had by use acquired the authority of an original text, or in most of the living languages of Europe.

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III.

144. We shall conclude this portion of literary history with a few illustrations of what a German writer calls "the exterior being of books *," for which I do not find an equivalent in English idiom. The trade of bookselling seems to have been established at Paris and at Bologna in the twelfth century ; the lawyers and universities called it into life.† It is very improbable that it existed in what we properly call the dark ages. Peter of Blois mentions a book which he had bought of a public dealer (a quodam publico mangone librorum). But we do not find, I believe, many distinct accounts of them till the next age. These dealers were denominated Stationarii, perhaps from the open stalls at which they carried on their business, though statio is a general word for a shop, in low Latin.‡ They appear, by the old statutes of the university of Paris, and by those of Bologna, to have sold books upon commission ; and are sometimes, though not uniformly, distinguished from the Librarii ; a word which, having originally been confined to the copyists of books, was afterwards applied to those who traded in them.§ They sold

Trade of
book-
selling.

* Aüsseres bucher-wesen. Savigny, iii. 532.

† Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 142.

‡ Du Cange, in voc.

§ The Librarii were properly

those who transcribed new books ; the Antiquarii old ones. This distinction is as old as Cassiodorus ; but doubtless it was not strictly observed in later times. Muratori, Dissert. 43, Du Cange.

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parchment and other materials of writing, which, with us, though, as far as I know, no where else, have retained the name of stationery, and naturally exercised the kindred occupations of binding and decorating. They probably employed transcribers: we find at least that there was a profession of copyists in the universities and in large cities; and by means of these, before the invention of printing, the necessary books of grammar, law, and theology were multiplied to a great extent for the use of students; but with much incorrectness, and far more expense than afterwards. That invention put a sudden stop to their honest occupation. But whatever hatred they might feel towards the new art, it was in vain to oppose its reception: no party could be raised in the public against so manifest and unalloyed a benefit; and the copyists, grown by habit fond of books, frequently employed themselves in the somewhat kindred labour of pressmen.*

Books sold
by printers.

145. The first printers were always booksellers, and sold their own impressions. These occupations were not divided till the early part of the sixteenth century.† But the risks of sale, at a time when learning was by no means general,

* Crevier, ii. 66. 130. et alibi. Du Cange, in voc. Stationarii, Librarii. Savigny, iii. 532—548. Chevallier, 302. Eichhorn, ii. 531. Meiners, Vergleich. der sitten, ii. 539. Greswell's Parisian Press, p. 8.

The parliament of Paris, on the petition of the copyists, ordered some of the first printed books to be seized. Lambinet calls this superstition; it was more probably

false compassion, and regard for existing interests, combined with dislike of all innovation. Louis XI. however, who had the merit of esteeming literature, evoked the process to the counsel of state, who restored the books. Lambinet, Hist. de l'Imprimerie, p. 172.

† Conversations-Lexicon, art. Buchhandlung.

combined with the great cost of production, paper and other materials being very dear, rendered this a hazardous trade. We have a curious petition of Sweynheim and Pannartz to Sixtus IV. in 1472, wherein they complain of their poverty, brought on by printing so many works, which they had not been able to sell. They state the number of impressions of each edition. Of the classical authors they had generally printed 275; of Virgil and the philosophical works of Cicero, twice that number. In theological publications the usual number of copies had also been 550. The whole number of copies printed was 12,475.* It is possible that experience made other printers more discreet in their estimation of the public demand. Notwithstanding the casualties of three centuries, it seems, from the great scarcity of these early editions which has long existed, that the original circulation must have been much below the number of copies printed, as indeed the complaint of Sweynheim and Pannartz shows.†

146. The price of books was diminished by four fifths after the invention of printing. Chevillier gives some instances of a fall in this proportion. But not content with such a reduction, the university of Paris proceeded to establish a tariff, according to which every edition was to be sold, and seems to have set the prices very low. This

Price of
books.

* Maittaire. Lambinet, p. 166. Beckmann, iii. 119., erroneously says that this was the number of volumes remaining in their warehouses.

† Lambinet says, that the num-

ber of impressions did not generally exceed three hundred. p. 197. Even this seems large, compared with the present scarcity of books unlikely to have been destroyed by careless use.

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was by virtue of the prerogatives they exerted, as we shall soon find, over the book-trade of the capital. The priced catalogues of Colinæus and Robert Stephens are extant, relating, of course, to a later period than the present; but we shall not return to the subject. The Greek Testament of Colinæus was sold for twelve sous, the Latin for six. The folio Latin Bible, printed by Stephens in 1532, might be had for one hundred sous, a copy of the Pandects for forty sous, a Virgil for two sous and six deniers; a Greek grammar of Clenardus for two sous, Demosthenes and Æschines, I know not what edition, for five sous. It would of course be necessary, before we can make any use of these prices, to compare them with that of corn.*

Form of
books.

147. The more usual form of books printed in the fifteenth century is in folio. But the Psalter of 1457, and the Donatus of the same year, are in quarto; and this size is not uncommon in the

* Chevallier, *Origines de l'Imprimerie de Paris*, p. 370. et seqq. In the preceding pages he mentions what I should perhaps have introduced before, that a catalogue of the books in the Sorbonne, in 1292, contains above 1000 volumes, which were collectively valued at 3812 livres, 10 sous, 8 deniers. In a modern English book on literary antiquities, this is set down 3812l. 10s. 8d.; which is a happy way of helping the reader.

Lambinet mentions a few prices of early books, which are not trifling. The Mentz Bible of 1462 was purchased in 1470 by a bishop of Angers for forty gold crowns. An English gentleman paid eigh-

teen gold florins, in 1481, for a missal: upon which Lambinet makes a remark: — Mais on a toujours fait payer plus cher aux Anglais qu'aux autres nations. p. 198. The florin was worth about four francs of present money, equivalent perhaps to twenty-four in command of commodities. The crown was worth rather more.

Instances of an almost incredible price of manuscripts are to be met with in Robertson and other common authors. It is to be remembered that a particular book might easily bear a monopoly price; and that this is no test of the cost of those which might be multiplied by copying.

early Italian editions of classics. The disputed Oxford book of 1468, *Sancti Jeronymi Expositio*, is in octavo, and would, if genuine, be the earliest specimen of that size; which may perhaps furnish an additional presumption against the date. It is at least, however, of 1478, when the octavo form, as we shall immediately see, was of the rarest occurrence. Maittaire, in whom alone I have had the curiosity to make this search, which would be more troublesome in Panzer's arrangement, mentions a book printed in octavo at Milan in 1470; but the existence of this, and of one or two more that follow, seems equivocal; and the first on which we can rely is the *Sallust*, printed at Valencia in 1475. Another book of that form, at Treviso, occurs in the same year, and an edition of *Pliny's epistles* at Florence in 1478. They become from this time gradually more common; but even at the end of the century form rather a small proportion of editions. I have not observed that the duodecimo division of the sheet was adopted in any instance. But it is highly probable that the volumes of Panzer furnish means of correcting these little notices, which I offer as suggestions to persons more erudite in such matters. The price and convenience of books are evidently not unconnected with their size.

148. Nothing could be less unreasonable than that the printer should have a better chance of indemnifying himself and the author, if in those days the author, as probably he did, hoped for some lucrative return after his exhausting drudgery, by means of an exclusive privilege. The senate of Venice

Exclusive
privileges.

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granted an exclusive privilege for five years to John of Spire in 1469, for the first book printed in the city, his edition of Cicero's epistles.* But I am not aware that this extended to any other work. And this seems to have escaped the learned Beckmann, who says, that the earliest instance of protected copyright on record appears to be in favour of a book insignificant enough, a missal for the church of Bamberg, printed in 1490. It is probable that other privileges of an older date have not been found. In 1491, one occurs at the end of a book printed at Venice, and five more at the same place within the century; the Aristotle of Aldus being one of the books: one also is found at Milan. These privileges are always recited at the end of the volume. They are, however, very rare in comparison with the number of books published, and seem not accorded by preference to the most important editions.†

Power of
universities
over book-
selling.

149. In these exclusive privileges, the printer was forced to call in the magistrate for his own benefit. But there was often a different sort of interference by the civil power with the press. The destruction of books, and the prohibition of their sale, had not been unknown to antiquity; instances of it occur in the free republics of Athens and Rome; but it was naturally more frequent under suspicious despotisms, especially when to the jealousy of the state was superadded that of the church, and novelty, even in speculation, became a crime.‡

* Tiraboschi, vi. 139. I have a recollection of some more decisive authority than this passage, but cannot find it.

† Beckmann's Hist. of Inventions, iii. 109.
‡ Id. 93.

Ignorance came on with the fall of the empire, and it was unnecessary to guard against the abuse of an art which very few possessed at all. With the first revival of letters in the eleventh and twelfth centuries sprang up the reviving shoots of heretical freedom; but with Berenger and Abelard came also the jealousy of the church, and the usual exertion of the right of the strongest. Abelard was censured by the council of Soissons in 1121, for suffering copies of his book to be taken without the approbation of his superiors, and the delinquent volumes were given to the flames. It does not appear, however, that any regulation on this subject had been made.* But when the sale of books became the occupation of a class of traders, it was deemed necessary to place them under restraint. Those of Paris and Bologna, the cities, doubtless, where the greatest business of this kind was carried on, came altogether into the power of the universities. It is proved by various statutes of the university of Paris, originating, no doubt, in some authority conferred by the crown, and bearing date from the year 1275 to 1403, that booksellers were appointed by the university, and considered as its officers, probably matriculated by entry on her roll; that they took an oath, renewable at her pleasure, to observe her statutes and regulations; that they were admitted upon security, and testimonials to their moral conduct; that no one could sell books in Paris without this permission; and that they could expose no book to

* Hist. Litt. de la France, ix. 28.

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sale without communication with the university, and without its approbation; that the university fixed the prices, according to the tariff of four sworn booksellers, at which books should be sold, or lent to the scholars; that a fine might be imposed for incorrect copies; that the sellers were bound to fix up in their shops a priced catalogue of their books, besides other regulations of less importance. Books deemed by the university unfit for perusal were sometimes burned by its order.* Chevillier gives several prices for lending books (*pro exemplari concessa scholaribus*) fixed about 1303. The books mentioned are all of divinity, philosophy, or canon law; on an average, the charge for about twenty pages was a sou. The university of Toulouse exercised the same authority; and Albert III., archduke of Austria, founding the university of Vienna about 1384, copied the statutes of Paris in this control over bookselling as well as in other respects.† The stationarii of Bologna were also bound by oath, and gave sureties, to fulfil their duties towards the university; one of these was, to keep by them copies of books to the number of one hundred and seventeen, for the hire of which a price was fixed.‡ By degrees, however, a class of booksellers grew up at Paris, who took no oath to the university, and were consequently not admitted to its privileges, being usually poor scholars, who were tolerated in selling books of low price. These were of no importance, till the privileged,

* Chevillier, *Origines de l'Imprimerie de Paris*, p. 302, et seqq. Crevier, ii. 66.

† Chevillier, *ibid.*
‡ Savigny, iii. 540.

or sworn traders, having been reduced by a royal ordinance of 1488 to twenty-four, this lower class silently increased, at length the practice of taking an oath to the university fell into disuse.*

150. The vast and sudden extension of the means of communicating and influencing opinion which the discovery of printing afforded, did not long remain unnoticed. Few have temper and comprehensive views enough not to desire the prevention by force of that which they reckon detrimental to truth and right. Hermolaus Barbarus, in a letter to Merula, recommends that, on account of the many trifling publications which took men off from reading the best authors, nothing should be printed without the approbation of competent judges.† The governments of Europe cared little for what seemed an evil to Hermolaus. But they perceived that, especially in Germany, a country where the principles that were to burst out in the Reformation were evidently germinating in this century, where a deep sense of the corruptions of the church pervaded every class, that incredible host of popular religious tracts, which the Rhine and Neckar poured forth like their waters, were of no slight danger to the two powers, or at least the union of the two, whom the people had so long obeyed. We find, therefore, an instance, in 1480, of a book called *Nosce teipsum*, printed at Heidelberg with the approving testimonies of four persons, who may be presumed, though it is not stated, to have been

Restraints
on sale of
printed
books.

* Chevillier, 334—351.

† Beckmann, iii. 98.

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appointed censors on that occasion.* Two others, one of which is a Bible, have been found printed at Cologne in 1479; in the subscription to which, the language of public approbation by the university is more express. The first known instance, however, of the regular appointment of a censor on books is in the mandate of Berthold archbishop of Mentz, in 1486. "Notwithstanding," he begins, "the facility given to the acquisition of science by the divine art of printing, it has been found that some abuse this invention, and convert that which was designed for the instruction of mankind to their injury. For books on the duties and doctrines of religion are translated from Latin into German, and circulated among the people, to the disgrace of religion itself; and some have even had the rashness to make faulty versions of the canons of the church into the vulgar tongue, which belong to a science so difficult, that it is enough to occupy the life of the wisest man. Can such men assert, that our German language is capable of expressing what great authors have written in Greek and Latin on the high mysteries of the Christian faith, and on general science? Certainly it is not; and hence they either invent new words, or use old ones in erroneous senses; a thing especially dangerous in sacred Scripture. For who will admit that men without learning, or women, into whose hands these translations may fall, can find the true sense of the gospels, or of the epistles of St. Paul? much less can they enter

* Beckmann, 99.

on questions which, even among catholic writers, are open to subtle discussion. But since this art was first discovered in this city of Mentz, and we may truly say by divine aid, and is to be maintained by us in all its honour, we strictly forbid all persons to translate, or circulate when translated, any books upon any subject whatever from the Greek, Latin, or any other tongue, into German, until, before printing, and again before their sale, such translations shall be approved by four doctors herein named, under penalty of excommunication, and of forfeiture of the books, and of one hundred golden florins to the use of our exchequer.”*

151. I have given the substance of this mandate rather at length, because it has a considerable bearing on the preliminary history of the Reformation, and yet has never, to my knowledge, been produced with that view. For it is obvious that it was on account of religious translations, and especially those of the Scripture, which had been very early printed in Germany, that this alarm was taken by the worthy archbishop. A bull of Alexander VI., in 1501, reciting that many pernicious books had been printed in various parts of the world, and especially in the provinces of Cologne, Mentz, Treves, and Magdeburg, forbids all printers in these provinces to publish any books without the licence of the archbishops or their officials.† We here perceive the distinction made between these parts of Germany and the rest of Europe,

Effect of
printing on
the Reform-
ation.

* Beckmann, 101., from the fourth volume of Gudén's *Codex diplomaticus*. The Latin will be found in Beckmann.

† Id. 106.

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and can understand their ripeness for the ensuing revolution. We perceive, also, the vast influence of the art of printing upon the Reformation. Among those who have been sometimes enumerated as its precursors, a place should be left for Schœffer and Gutenberg; nor has this always been forgotten.*

• Gerdes, in his *Hist. Evangel. Reformati*, who has gone very laboriously into this subject, justly dwells on the influence of the art of printing.

CHAP. IV.

ON THE LITERATURE OF EUROPE FROM 1500 TO
1520.

SECT. I. 1501—1510.

Classical Learning of Italy in this Period — Of France, Germany, and England — Works of Polite Literature in Languages of Italy, Spain, and England.

1. **THE** new century did not begin very auspiciously for the literary credit of Italy. We may, indeed, consider the whole period between the death of Lorenzo in 1492, and the pontificate of his son in 1513, as less brilliant than the two ages which we connect with their names. But when measured by the labours of the press, the last ten years of the fifteenth century were considerably more productive than any which had gone before. In the present decad a striking decline was perceptible. Thus in comparing the numbers of books printed in the chief towns of Italy, we find —

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Decline of
learning in
Italy.

	1491—1500	1501—1510
Florence	179	47
Rome	460	41
Milan	228	99
Venice	1491	536 *

* Panzer.

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Such were the fruits of the ambition of Ferdinand and of Louis XII., and the first interference of strangers with the liberties of Italy. Wars so protracted within the bosom of a country, if they do not prevent the growth of original genius, must yet be unfavourable to that secondary, but more diffused excellence, which is nourished by the wealth of patrons and the tranquillity of universities. Thus the gymnasium of Rome, founded by Eugenius IV., but lately endowed and regulated by Alexander VI., who had established it in a handsome edifice on the Quirinal hill, was despoiled of its revenues by Julius II., who, with some liberality towards painters, had no regard for learning; and this will greatly account for the remarkable decline in the typography of Rome. Thus too the Platonic school at Florence soon went to decay after the fall of the Medici, who had fostered it; and even the rival philosophy which rose upon its ruins, and was taught at the beginning of this century with much success at Padua by Pomponatius, according to the original principles of Aristotle, and by two other professors of great eminence in their time, Nifo and Achillini, according to the system of Averroes, could not resist the calamities of war: the students of that university were dispersed in 1509, after the unfortunate defeat of Ghiaradadda.

Press of
Aldus.

2. Aldus himself left Venice in 1506, his effects in the territory having been plundered, and did not open his press again till 1512, when he entered into partnership with his father-in-law, Andrew Asola. He had been actively employed during

the first years of the century. He published Sophocles, Herodotus, and Thucydides in 1502, Euripides and Herodian in 1503, Demosthenes in 1504. These were important accessions to Greek learning, though so much remained behind. A circumstance may be here mentioned, which had so much influence in facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, that it renders the year 1501 a sort of epoch in literary history. He that year not only introduced a new Italic character, called Aldine, more easily read perhaps than his Roman letters, which are somewhat rude; but, what was of more importance, began to print in a small octavo or duodecimo form, instead of the cumbrous and expensive folios that had been principally in use. Whatever the great of ages past might seem to lose by this indignity, was more than compensated in the diffused love and admiration of their writings. "With what pleasure," says M. Renouard, "must the studious man, the lover of letters, have beheld these benevolent octavos, these Virgils and Horaces contained in one little volume, which he might carry in his pocket while travelling or in a walk; which besides cost him hardly more than two of our francs, so that he could get a dozen of them for the price of one of those folios, that had hitherto been the sole furniture of his library. The appearance of these correct and well printed octavos ought to be as much remarked as the substitution of printed books for manuscripts itself." * We have seen above, that not only quartos, nearly

* Renouard, Hist. de l'Imprimerie des Aldes. Roscoe's *Lee X.* ch. ii.

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as portable perhaps as octavos, but the latter form also, had been coming into use towards the close of the fifteenth century, though, I believe, it was sparingly employed for classical authors.

His academy.

3. It was about 1500, that Aldus drew together a few scholars into a literary association, called Aldi Neacademia. Not only amicable discussions, but the choice of books to be printed, of manuscripts and various readings, occupied their time, so that they may be considered as literary partners of the noble-minded printer. This academy was dispersed by the retirement of Aldus from Venice, and never met again.*

Dictionary
of Calepio.

4. The first edition of Calepio's Latin Dictionary, which, though far better than one or two obscure books that preceded it, and enriched by plundering the stores of Valla and Perotti, was very defective, appeared at Reggio in 1502.† It was so greatly augmented by subsequent improvers, that *calepin* has become a name in French for any voluminous compilation. This dictionary was not only of Latin and Italian, but several other languages; and these were extended in the Basle edition of 1581 to eleven. It is still, if not the best, the most complete polyglott lexicon for the European languages. Calepio, however moderate might be his erudition, has just claim to be esteemed

* Tiraboschi. Roscoe. Renouard. Scipio Forteguerra, who latinized his name into Cartermachus, was secretary to this society, and among its most distinguished members. He was celebrated in his time for a discourse, *De Laudibus Literarum*

Græcarum, reprinted by Henry Stephens in his *Thesaurus. Biogr. Univ.*, Forteguerra.

† Brunet. Tiraboschi (x. 363.) gives some reason to suspect that there may have been an earlier edition.

one of the most effective instruments in the restoration of the Latin language in its purity to general use; for though some had by great acuteness and diligence attained a good style in the fifteenth century, that age was looked upon in Italy itself as far below the subsequent period.*

5. We may read in Panzer the titles of 325 books printed during these ten years at Leipsic, 60 of which are classical, but chiefly, as before, small school-books; 14 out of 214 at Cologne; 10 out of 208 at Strasburg; 1 out of 84 at Basle; but scarcely any books whatever appear at Louvain. One printed at Erfurt in 1501 deserves some attention. The title runs, "*Εισαγωγή προς των γραμματων Ελληνων*, Elementale Introductorium in idioma Græcanicum," with some more words. Panzer observes: "This Greek grammar, published by some unknown person, is undoubtedly the first which was published in Germany since the invention of printing." In this, however, as has already been shown, he is mistaken; unless we deny to the book printed at Deventer the name of a grammar. But Panzer was not acquainted with it. This seems to be the only attempt at Greek that

Books
printed in
Germany.

* Calepio is said by Morhof and Baillet to have copied Perotti's Cornucopia almost entire. Sir John Elyot long before had remarked: "Calepin nothing amended, but rather appaired that which Perottus had studiously gathered." But the Cornucopia was not a complete dictionary. It is generally agreed, that Calepio was an indifferent scholar, and that the first editions of his dictionary are of no great value. Nor have those

who have enlarged it done so with exactness, or with selection of good latinity. Even Passerat, the most learned of them, has not extirpated the unauthorised words of Calepio. Baillet, *Jugemens des Savans*, ii. 44.

Several bad dictionaries, abridged from the *Catholicon*, appeared near the end of the fifteenth century, and at the beginning of the next. Du Cange, *præfat.* in *Glossar.* p. 47.

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First Greek
press at
Paris.

occurs in Germany during this decad ; and it is unnecessary to comment on the ignorance, which the gross solecism in the title displays.*

6. Paris contributed in ten years 430 editions, thirty-two being of Latin classics. And in 1507 Giles Gourmont, a printer of that city, assisted by the purse of Francis Tissard, had the honour of introducing the Greek language on this side, as we may say, of the Alps ; for the trifling exceptions we have mentioned scarcely affect his priority. Greek types had been used in a few words by Badius Ascensius, a learned and meritorious Parisian printer, whose publications began about 1498. They occur in his edition (1505) of Valla's Annotations on the Greek Testament.† Four little books, namely, a small miscellaneous volume preceded by an alphabet, the Works and Days of Hesiod, the Frogs and Mice of Homer, and the Erotemata or Greek grammar of Chrysoloras, to which four a late writer has added an edition of Musæus, were the

* Panzer, vi. 494. We find however a tract by Hegius, *De Utilitate Linguae Græcæ*, printed at Deventer in 1501 ; but whether it contains Greek characters or not, must be left to conjecture. Lambinet says, that Martens, a Flemish printer, employed Greek types in quotations as early as 1501 or 1502.

† Chevallier, *Origines de l'Imprimerie de Paris*, p. 246. Greswell's view of early Parisian Greek Press, i. 15. Panzer, according to Mr. Greswell, has recorded nearly 400 editions from the press of Badius. They include almost every Latin classic, usually with notes. He also printed a few Greek authors. See also Bayle

and Biogr. Univ. The latter refers the first works from the Parisian press of Badius to 1511, but probably by misprint. Badius had learned Greek at Ferrara. If Bayle is correct, he taught it at Lyons before he set up his press at Paris, which is worthy of notice ; but he gives no authority, except for the fact of his teaching in the former city, which might not be the Greek language. It is said, however, that he came to Paris in order to give instruction in Greek about 1499. Bayle, art. Badius, note H. It is said in the *Biographie Universelle*, that Denys le Fevre taught Greek at Paris in 1504, when only sixteen years old : but the story seems apocryphal.

first fruits of Gourmont's press. Aleander, a learned Italian, who played afterwards no inconsiderable part in the earlier period of the Reformation, came to Paris in 1508, and received a pension from Louis XII.* He taught Greek there, and perhaps Hebrew. Through his care, besides a Hebrew and Greek alphabet in 1508, Gourmont printed some of the moral works of Plutarch in 1509.

7. We learn from a writer of the most respectable authority, Camerarius, that the elements of Greek were already taught to some boys in parts of Germany.† About 1508, Reuchlin, on a visit to George Simler, a schoolmaster in Hesse, found a

Early
studies of
Melanch-
thon.

* Aleander was no favourite with Erasmus, and Luther utters many invectives against him. He was a strenuous supporter of all things as they were in the church, and would have presided in the council of Trent, as legate of Paul III., who had given him a cardinal's hat, if he had not been prevented by death. His epitaph on himself may be mentioned, as the best Greek verses by a Frank that I remember to have read before the middle of the eighteenth century, though the reader may not think much of them.

κάθ' ἂν οὐκ αἰκνῶν, ὅτι πάνσομαι
ὦν ἐπιμάρτυς
πῶλλον, ὥν περ ἰδεῖν ἀλγίον ἦν
Σανάτου.

It is fair to say of Aleander, that he was the friend of Sadolet. In a letter of that excellent person to Paul III., he praises Aleander very highly, and requests for him the hat, which the Pope in consequence bestowed. Sadolet. Epist. l. xii. See, for Aleander, Bayle;

Sleidan, Hist. de la Réformation, l. ii. and iii.; Roscoe's Leo X. ch. xxi.; Jortin's Erasmus, passim.

† Jam enim pluribus in locis melius quam dudum pueritia institui et doctrina in scholis usurpari politor, quod et bonorum autorum scripta in manus teneantur, et elementa quoque linguæ Græcæ alicubi proponerentur ad discendum, cum seniorum admiratione maxima, et ardentissima cupiditate juniorum, cujus utriusque tum non tam judicium quam novitas causa fuit. Simileras, qui postea ex primario grammatico eximius jurisconsultus factus est, initio hanc doctrinam non vulgandam aliquantisper arbitrabatur. Itaque Græcarum literarum scholarum explicabat aliquot discipulis suis privatim, quibus dabat hanc operam peculiarem, ut quos summo opere diligeret. Camerarius, Vita Melanchthonis. I find also in one of Melanchthon's own epistles, that he learned the Greek grammar from George Simler. Epist. Melanchth. p. 351. (edit. 1647.)

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relation of his own, little more than ten years old, who, uniting extraordinary quickness with thirst for learning, had already acquired the rudiments of that language; and presenting him with a lexicon and grammar, precious gifts in those times, changed his German name, Schwartzerd, to one of equivalent meaning and more classical sound, Melanchthon. He had himself set the example of assuming a name of Greek derivation, being almost as much known by the name of Capnio as by his own. And this pedantry, which continued to prevail for a century and a half afterwards, might be excused by the great uncouthness of many German, not to say French and English, surnames in their latinised forms. Melanchthon, the precocity of his youth being followed by a splendid maturity, became not only one of the greatest lights of the Reformation, but, far above all others, the founder of general learning in Germany.*

Learning in
England.

8. England seems to have been nearly stationary in academical learning during the unpropitious reign of Henry VII.† But just hopes were enter-

* Camerarius. Meiners, i. 73. The Biographie Universelle, art. Melanchthon, calls him nephew of Reuchlin: but this seems not to be the case; Camerarius only says, that their families were connected quadam cognationis necessitudine.

† "The schools were much frequented with quirks and sophistry. All things, whether taught or written, seemed to be trite and inane. No pleasant streams of humanity or mythology were gliding among us, and the Greek language, from

whence the greater part of knowledge is derived, was at a very low ebb, or in a manner forgotten." Wood's Annals of Oxford, A.D. 1508. The word "forgotten" is improperly applied to Greek, which had never been known. In this reign, but in what part of it does not appear, the university of Oxford hired an Italian, one Caius Auberinus, to compose the public orations and epistles, and to explain Terence in the schools. War-ton, ii. 420., from MS. authority.

tained from the accession of his son in 1509, who had received in some degree a learned education. And the small knot of excellent men, united by zeal for improvement, Grocyn, Linacre, Latimer, Fisher, Colet, More, succeeded in bringing over their friend Erasmus to teach Greek at Cambridge in 1510. The students, he says, were too poor to pay him any thing; nor had he many scholars.* His instruction was confined to the grammar. In the same year, Colet, dean of St. Paul's, founded there a school, and published a Latin grammar; five or six little works of the kind had already appeared in England.† These trifling things are mentioned to let the reader take notice that there is nothing more worthy to be named. Twenty-six books were printed at London during this deced; among these Terence in 1504; but no other Latin author of classical name. The difference in point of learning between Italy and England was at least that of a century; that is, the former was more advanced in knowledge of ancient literature in 1400 than the latter was in 1500.

9. It is plain, however, that on the continent of Europe, though no very remarkable advances were made in these ten years, learning was slowly progressive, and the men were living who were to bear fruit in due season. Erasmus republished his *Adages* with such great additions as rendered them almost a new work; while Budæus, in his *Observ-*

Erasmus
and Budæus.

* *Hactenus prælegimus Chrysoloræ grammaticam, sed paucis; fortassis frequentiori auditorio Theodori grammaticam auspica-*
bimur. Ep. cxxiii. (16th Oct. 1511.)

† Wood talks of Holt's *Lac Puerorum*, published in 1497, as if it had made an epoch in literature. It might be superior to any grammar we already possessed.

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ations upon the Pandects, gave the first example of applying philological and historical literature to the illustration of Roman law, by which others, with more knowledge of jurisprudence than he possessed, were in the next generation signally to change the face of that science.

Study of
eastern
languages.

10. The eastern languages began now to be studied, though with very imperfect means. Hebrew had been cultivated in the Franciscan monasteries of Tübingen and Basle before the end of the last century. The first grammar was published by Conrad Pellican in 1503. Eichhorn calls it an evidence of the deficiencies of his knowledge, though it cost him incredible pains. Reuchlin gave a better, with a dictionary, in 1506; which, enlarged by Münster, long continued to be a standard book. A Hebrew psalter with three Latin translations, and one in French, was published in 1509 by Henry Stephens, the progenitor of a race illustrious in typographical and literary history. Petrus de Alcalá, in 1506, attempted an Arabic vocabulary, printing the words in Roman letter.*

Dramatic
works.

11. If we could trust an article in the *Bio-graphie Universelle*, a Portuguese, Gil Vicente, deserves the high praise of having introduced the regular drama into Europe; the first of his pieces having been represented at Lisbon in 1504.† But,

* Eichhorn, ii. 562, 563.; v. 609. Meiners's *Life of Reuchlin*, in *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter männer*, i. 68. A very few instances of Hebrew scholars in the fifteenth century might be found, besides

Reuchlin and Picus of Mirandola. Tiraboschi gives the chief place among these to Giannozzo Manetti. vii. 123.

† Biogr. Univ., art. Gil Vicente. Another *Life of the same drama*

according to the much superior authority of Bouterwek, Gil Vicente was a writer in the old national style of Spain and Portugal; and his early compositions are Autos, or spiritual dramas, totally unlike any regular plays, and rude both in design and execution. He became, however, a comic writer of great reputation among his countrymen at a later period, but in the same vein of uncultivated genius, and not before Machiavel and Ariosto had established their dramatic renown. The Calandra of Bibbiena, afterwards a cardinal, was represented at Venice in 1508, though not published till 1524. An analysis of this play will be found in Ginguéné; it bears only a general resemblance to the Menæchmi of Plautus. Perhaps the Calandra may be considered as the earliest modern comedy, or at least the earliest that is known to be extant; for its five acts and intricate plot exclude the competition of Maitre Patelin.* But there is a more celebrated piece in the Spanish language, of which it is probably impossible to determine the date; the tragi-comedy, as it has been called, of Calisto and Melibœa. This is the work of two authors; one generally supposed to be Rodrigo Cota, who planned the story, and wrote

Calisto and
Melibœa.

tist in a later volume, under the title Vicente, seems designed to retract this claim. Bouterwek adverts to this supposed drama of 1504, which is an Auto on the festival of Corpus Christi, and of the simplest kind.

* Ginguéné, vi. 171. An earlier writer on the Italian theatre is in raptures with this play. "The

Greeks, Latins, and moderns have never made, and perhaps never will make, so perfect a comedy as the Calandra. It is, in my opinion, the model of good comedy." Riccoboni, *Hist. du Théâtre Italien*, i. 148. This is much to say, and shows an odd taste, for the Calandra neither displays character nor excites interest.

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the first act; the other, Fernando de Rojas, who added twenty more acts to complete the drama. This alarming number does not render the play altogether so prolix as might be supposed, the acts being only what with us are commonly denominated scenes. It is, however, much beyond the limits of representation. Some have supposed Calisto and Melibœa to have been commenced by Juan de la Mena before the middle of the fifteenth century. But this, Antonio tells us, shows ignorance of the style belonging to that author and to his age. It is far more probably of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella; and as an Italian translation appears to have been published in 1514, we may presume that it was finished and printed in Spain about the present decad.*

Its character.

12. Bouterwek and Sismondi have given some account of this rather remarkable dramatic work. But they hardly do it justice, especially the former, who would lead the reader to expect something very anomalous and extravagant. It appears to me, that it is as regular and well-contrived as the old comedies generally were: the action is simple and uninterrupted; nor can it be reckoned very extraordinary, that what Bouterwek calls the unities of time and place should be transgressed, when for the next two centuries they were never observed. Calisto and Melibœa was at least deemed

* Antonio. Bibl. Hisp. Nova. Andr  s, v. 125. La Celestina, says the latter, certo contiene un fatto bene svolto, e spiegato con episodj verisimili e naturali, dipinge con verit   i caratteri, ed

esprime talora con calore gli affetti; e tutto questo   mio giudizio potr  bastare per darli il vanto d'essere stata la prima composizione teatrale scritta con eleganza e regolarit .

so original and important an accession to literature, that it was naturalised in several languages. A very early imitation, rather than version, in English, appears to have been printed in 1530.* A real translation, with the title *Celestina* (the name of a procuress who plays the chief part in the drama, and by which it has been frequently known), is mentioned by Herbert under the year 1598. And there is another translation, or second edition, in 1631, with the same title, from which all my acquaintance with this play is derived. Gaspar Barthius gave it in Latin, 1624, with the title, *Pornobosco-didascalus*.† It was extolled by some as a salutary exposition of the effects of vice —

*Quo modo adolescentulæ
Lenarum ingenia et mores possent noscere, —*

and condemned by others as too open a display of it. Bouterwek has rather exaggerated the indecency of this drama, which is much less offensive, unless softened in the translation, than in most of our old comedies. The style of the first author is said to be more elegant than that of his continuator; but this is not very apparent in the English version. The chief characters throughout are pretty well drawn, and there is a vein of humour in some of the comic parts.

* Dibdin's *Typographical Antiquities*. Mr. Collier (*Hist. of Dramatic Poetry*, ii. 408.) has given a short account of this production, which he says "is not long enough for a play, and could only have been acted as an inter-

lude." It must therefore be very different from the original.

† Clement, *Bibliothèque Curieuse*. This translation is sometimes erroneously named *Pornodidascalus*; the title of a very different book.

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Juan de la
Enzina.

13. The first edition of the works of a Spanish poet, Juan de la Enzina, appeared in 1501, though they were probably written in the preceding century. Some of these are comedies, as one biographer calls them, or rather, perhaps, as Bouterwek expresses it, "sacred and profane eclogues, in the form of dialogues, represented before distinguished persons on festivals." Enzina wrote also a treatise on Castilian poetry, which, according to Bouterwek, is but a short essay on the rules of metre.*

Arcadia of
Sannaz-
zaro.

14. The pastoral romance, as was before mentioned, began a little before this time in Portugal. An Italian writer of fine genius, Sannazzaro, adopted it in his *Arcadia*, of which the first edition was in 1502. Harmonious prose intermingled with graceful poetry, and with a fable just capable of keeping awake the attention, though it could never excite emotion, communicate a tone of pleasing sweetness to this volume. But we have been so much used to fictions of more passionate interest, that we hardly know how to accommodate ourselves to the mild languor of these early romances. A recent writer places the *Arcadia* at the head of Italian prose in that age. "With a less embarrassed construction," he says, "than Boccaccio, and less of a servile mannerism than Bembo, the style of Sannazzaro is simple, flowing, rapid, harmonious; if it should seem now and then too florid and diffuse, this may be pardoned in a romance.

* Bouterwek. Biogr. Univ., art. Enzina. The latter praises this work of Enzina more highly, but whether from equal knowledge I

cannot say. The dramatic compositions above mentioned are most scarce.

It is to him, in short, rather than to Bembo, that we owe the revival of correctness and elegance in the Italian prose of the sixteenth century; and his style in the *Arcadia* would have been far more relished than that of the *Asolani*, if the originality of his poetry had not engrossed our attention." He was the first who employed in any considerable degree the *sdrucchiolo* verse, though it occurs before; but the difficulty of finding rhymes for it drives him frequently upon unauthorised phrases. He may also be reckoned the first who restored the polished style of Petrarch, which no writer of the fifteenth century had successfully emulated.*

15. The *Asolani* of Peter Bembo, a dialogue, the scene of which is laid at Asola in the Venetian territory, were published in 1505. They are disquisitions on love, tedious enough to our present apprehension, but in a style so pure and polite, that they became the favourite reading among the superior ranks in Italy, where the coldness and pedantry of such dissertations were forgiven for their classical dignity and moral truth. The *Asolani* has been thought to make an epoch in Italian literature,

*Asolani of
Bembo.*

* Salfi, *Continuation de Ginguéné*, x. 92. Corniani, iv. 12. Roscoe speaks of the *Arcadia* with less admiration, but perhaps more according to the feelings of the general reader. But I cannot altogether concur in his sweeping denunciation of poetical prose, "that hermaphrodite of literature." In many styles of composition, and none more than such as the *Arcadia*, it may be read with delight, and without wounding a rational

taste. The French language, which is not well adapted to poetry, would have lost some of its most imaginative passages, with which Buffon, St. Pierre, and others now living have enriched it, if a highly ornamented prose had been wholly proscribed; and we may say the same with equal truth of our own. It is another thing to condemn the peculiar style of poetry in writings that from their subject demand a very different tone.

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though the *Arcadia* is certainly a more original and striking work of genius.

Dunbar.

16. I do not find at what time the poems in the Scottish dialect by William Dunbar were published; but "the Thistle and the Rose," on the marriage of James IV. with Margaret of England in 1503, must be presumed to have been written very little after that time. Dunbar, therefore, has the honour of leading the vanguard of British poetry in the sixteenth century. His allegorical poem, the *Golden Targe*, is of a more extended range, and displays more creative power. The versification of Dunbar is remarkably harmonious and exact for his age; and his descriptions are often very lively and picturesque. But it must be confessed, that there is too much of sunrise and singing-birds in all our mediæval poetry; a note caught from the French and Provençal writers, and repeated to satiety by our own. The allegorical characters of Dunbar are derived from the same source. He belongs, as a poet, to the school of Chaucer and Lydgate.*

Anatomy
of Zerbi.

17. The first book upon anatomy, since that of Mundinus, was by Zerbi of Verona, who taught in the university of Padua in 1495. The title is, *Liber anatomie corporis humani et singulorum membrorum illius*, 1503. He follows in general the plan of Mundinus; and his language is obscure, as well as full of inconvenient abbreviations; yet

* Warton, iii. 90. Ellis (*Specimens*, i. 377.) strangely calls Dunbar "the greatest poet that Scotland has produced." Pinkerton places him above Chaucer and Lydgate. *Chalmers's Biogr. Dict.*

the germ of discoveries that have crowned later anatomists with glory is sometimes perceptible in Zerbi; among others that of the Fallopian tubes.*

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18. We now, for the first time, take relations of voyages into our literary catalogue. During the fifteenth century, though the old travels of Marco Polo had been printed several times, and in different languages, and even those of Sir John Mandeville once; though the *Cosmography* of Ptolemy had appeared in not less than seven editions, and generally with maps, few, if any, original descriptions of the kingdoms of the world had gratified the curiosity of modern Europe. But the stupendous discoveries that signalised the last years of that age could not long remain untold. We may, however, give perhaps the first place to the voyages of Cadamosto, a Venetian, who, in 1455, under the protection of Prince Henry of Portugal, explored the western coast of Africa, and bore a part in discovering its two great rivers, as well as the Cape de Verde islands. "The relation of his voyages," says a late writer, "the earliest of modern travels, is truly a model, and would lose nothing by comparison with those of our best navigators. Its arrangement is admirable, its details are interesting, its descriptions clear and precise."† These voyages of Cadamosto do not occupy more than thirty pages in the collection of Ramusio, where they are reprinted. They are said

Voyages
of Cada-
mosto.

* Portal, *Hist. de l'Anatomie*. † *Biogr. Univ.*, art. Cadamosto.
Biogr. Univ., art. Zerbi.

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to have first appeared at Vicenza in 1507, with the title *Prima navigazione per l'oceano alle terre de' negri della bassa Ethiopia* di Luigi Cadamosto. It is asserted, however, by Brunet, that no edition exists earlier than 1519, and that this of 1507 is a confusion with the next book. This was a still more important production, announcing the great discoveries that Americo Vespucci was suffered to wrest, at least in name, from a more illustrious though ill-requested Italian : *Mondo nuovo, e paesi nuovamente ritrovati da Alberico Vesputio Florentino intitolati*. Vicenza, 1507. It does not appear that any earlier work on America had been published ; but an epistle of Columbus himself, *de insulis Indiæ nuper inventis*, was twice printed about 1493 in Germany, and probably in other countries ; and a few other brief notices of the recent discovery are to be traced. We find also in 1508 an account of the Portuguese in the East, which, being announced as a translation from the native language into Latin, may be presumed to have appeared before.*

* See Brunet, art. *Itinerarium* &c.

SECT. II. 1511—1520.

Age of Leo X. — Italian Dramatic Poetry — Classical Learning, especially Greek, in France, Germany, and England — Utopia of More — Erasmus — His Adages — Political Satire contained in them — Opposition of the Monks to Learning — Antipathy of Erasmus to them — Their Attack on Reuchlin — Origin of Reformation — Luther — Ariosto — Character of the Orlando Furioso — Various Works of Amusement in modern Languages — English Poetry — Pomponatius — Raymond Lully.

19. LEO X. became pope in 1513. His chief distinction, no doubt, is owing to his encouragement of the arts, or, more strictly, to the completion of those splendid labours of Raffaello, under his pontificate, which had been commenced by his predecessor. We have here only to do with literature; and in the promotion of this he certainly deserves a much higher name than any former pope, except Nicolas V., who, considering the difference of the times, and the greater solidity of his own character, as certainly stands far above him. Leo began by placing men of letters in the most honourable stations of his court. There were two, Bembo and Sadolet, who had by common confession reached a consummate elegance of style, in comparison of which the best productions of the last age seemed very imperfect. They were made apostolical secretaries. Beroaldo, second of the name, whose father, though a more fertile author, was inferior to him in taste, was intrusted with the Vatican library. John Lascaris and Marcus

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Leo X.,
his patron-
age of
letters.

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Musurus were invited to reside at Rome* ; and the pope, considering it, he says, no small part of his pontifical duty to promote the Latin literature, caused search to be made every where for manuscripts. This expression sounds rather oddly in his mouth ; and the less religious character of transalpine literature is visible in this as in every thing else.

Roman
gymna-
sium.

20. The personal taste of Leo was almost entirely directed towards poetry and the beauties of style. This, Tiraboschi seems to hint, might cause the more serious learning of antiquity to be rather neglected. But there does not seem to be much ground for this charge. We owe to Leo the publication, by Beroaldo, of the first five books of the *Annals of Tacitus*, which had lately been found in a German monastery. It appears that in 1514 above one hundred professors received salaries in the Roman university, or gymnasium, restored by the pope to its alienated revenues.† Leo seems

* John Lascaris, who is not to be confounded with Constantine Lascaris, by some thought to be his father, and to whom we owe a Greek grammar, after continuing for several years under the patronage of Lorenzo at Florence, where he was editor of the *Anthologia*, or collection of epigrams, printed in 1494, on the fall of the Medici family entered the service of Charles VIII., and lived many years at Paris. He was afterwards employed by Louis XII. as minister at Venice. After a residence of some duration at Rome, he was induced by Francis I. in 1518 to organise the literary institutions designed by the king to be es-

tablished at Paris. But these being postponed, Lascaris spent the remainder of his life partly in Paris, partly in Rome, and died in the latter city in 1535. Hody de Græcis illustribus.

† We are indebted to Roscoe for publishing this list. But as the number of one hundred professors might lead us to expect a most comprehensive scheme, it may be mentioned that they consisted of four for theology, eleven for canon law, twenty for civil law, sixteen for medicine, two for metaphysics, five for philosophy (probably physics), two for ethics, four for logic, one for astrology (probably astronomy), two for mathematics,

to have founded a seminary distinct from the former, under the superintendence of Lascaris, for the sole study of Greek, and to have brought over young men as teachers from Greece. In this academy a Greek press was established, where the scholiasts on Homer were printed in 1517.*

21. Leo was a great admirer of Latin poetry; and in his time the chief poets of Italy seem to have written several of their works, though not published till afterwards. The poems of Pontanus, which naturally belong to the fifteenth century, were first printed in 1513 and 1518; and those of Mantuan, in a collective form, about the same time.

Latin
poetry.

22. The Rosmunda of Rucellai, a tragedy in the Italian language, on the ancient regular model, was represented before Leo at Florence in 1515. It was the earliest known trial of blank verse; but it is acknowledged by Rucellai himself, that the Sophonisba of his friend Trissino, which is dedicated to Leo in the same year, though not

Italian
tragedy.

eighteen for rhetoric, three for Greek, and thirteen for grammar, in all a hundred and one. The salaries are subjoined in every instance; the highest are among the medical professors; the Greek are also high. Roscoe, ii. 333. and Append. No. 89.

Roscoe remarks that medical botany was one of the sciences taught, and that it was the earliest instance. If this be right, Bonafede of Padua cannot have been the first botanical professor in Europe, as we read that he did in 1533. But in the roll of these

Roman professors we only find that one was appointed ad declarationem simplicium medicinæ. I do not think this means more than the materia medica; we cannot infer that he lectured upon the plants themselves.

* Tiraboschi. Hody, p. 247. Roscoe, ch. 11. Leo was anticipated in his Greek editions by Chigi, a private Roman, who, with the assistance of Cornelio Benigno, and with Calliergus, a Cretan, for his printer, gave to the world two good editions of Pindar and Theocritus in 1515 and 1516.

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IV.Sophonisba
of Trissino.

published till 1524, preceded and suggested his own tragedy.* The *Sophonisba* is strictly on the Greek model, divided only by the odes of the chorus, but not into five portions or acts. The speeches in this tragedy are sometimes too long, the style unadorned, the descriptions now and then trivial. But in general there is a classical dignity about the sentiments, which are natural, though not novel; and the latter part, which we should call the fifth act, is truly noble, simple, and pathetic. Trissino was thoroughly conversant with the Greek drama, and had imbibed its spirit: seldom has Euripides written with more tenderness, or chosen a subject more fitted to his genius; for that of *Sophonisba*, in which many have followed Trissino with inferior success, is wholly for the Greek school; it admits, with no great difficulty, of

* This dedication, with a sort of apology for writing tragedies in Italian, will be found in Roscoe's Appendix, vol. vi. Roscoe quotes a few words from Rucellai's dedication of his poem, *L'Api*, to Trissino, acknowledging the latter as the inventor of blank verse. *Voi foste il primo, che questo modo di scrivere, in versi materni, liberi delle rime, poneste in luce.* Life of Leo X. ch. 16. See also Ginguéné, vol. vi. and Walker's Memoir on Italian Tragedy, as well as Tiraboschi. The earliest Italian tragedy, which is also on the subject of *Sophonisba*, by Galeotto del Carretto, was presented to the Marchioness of Mantua in 1502. But we do not find that it was brought on the stage; nor is it clear that it was printed so early as the present decad. But an edition of the *Pamphila*, a tragedy on

the story of *Sigismunda*, by Antonio da Pistoja, was printed at Venice in 1508. Walker, p. 11. Ginguéné has been ignorant of this very curious piece, from which Walker had given a few extracts, in rhymed measures of different kinds. Ginguéné indeed had never seen Walker's book, and his own is the worse for it. Walker was not a man of much vigour of mind, but had some taste, and great knowledge of his subject. This tragedy is mentioned by Quadrio, iv. 58., with the title *Il Filostrato e Panfila, doi amanti*.

It may be observed, that, notwithstanding the testimony of Rucellai himself above quoted, it is shown by Walker, (Appendix, No. 3.) that blank verse had been occasionally employed before Trissino.

the chorus, and consequently of the unities of time and place. It must, however, always chiefly depend on Sophonisba herself; for it is not easy to make Masinissa respectable, nor has Trissino succeeded in attempting it. The long continuance of alternate speeches in single lines, frequent in this tragedy, will not displease those to whom old associations are recalled by it.

23. The *Rosmunda* falls, in my opinion, below the *Sophonisba*, though it is the work of a better poet; and, perhaps, in language and description it is superior. What is told in narration, according to the ancient inartificial form of tragedy, is finely told; but the emotions are less represented than in the *Sophonisba*; the principal character is less interesting, and the story is unpleasing. *Rucellai* led the way to those accumulations of horrible and disgusting circumstances which deformed the European stage for a century afterwards. The *Rosmunda* is divided into five acts, but preserves the chorus. It contains imitations of the Greek tragedies, especially the *Antigone*, as the *Sophonisba* does of the *Ajax* and the *Medea*. Some lines in the latter, extolled by modern critics, are simply translated from the ancient tragedians.

Rosmunda
of *Rucellai*.

24. Two comedies by *Ariosto* seem to have been acted about 1512, and were written as early as 1495, when he was but twenty-one years old, which entitles him to the praise of having first conceived and carried into effect the idea of regular comedies, in imitation of the ancient, though *Bibbiena* had the advantage of first occupying the

Comedies
of *Ariosto*.

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stage with his Calandra. The Cassaria and Suppositi of Ariosto are, like the Calandra, free imitations of the manner of Plautus, in a spirited and natural dialogue, and with that graceful flow of language which appears spontaneous in all his writings.*

Books
printed in
Italy.

25. The north of Italy still endured the warfare of stranger armies: Ravenna, Novara, Marignan, attest the well-fought contention. Aldus, however, returning to Venice in 1512, published many editions before his death in 1516. Pindar, Plato, and Lysias first appeared in 1513, Athenæus in 1514, Xenophon, Strabo, and Pausanias in 1516, Plutarch's Lives in 1517. The Aldine press then continued under his father-in-law, Andrew Asola, but with rather diminished credit. It appears that the works printed during this period, from 1511 to 1520, were, at Rome 116, at Milan 91, at Florence 133, and at Venice 511. This is, perhaps, less than from the general renown of Leo's age we should have expected. We may select, among the original publications, the *Lectiones Antiquæ* of Cælius Rhodiginus (1516), and a little treatise on Italian grammar by Fortunio, which has no claim to notice but as the earliest book on the subject.† The former, though not the first, appears to have been by far the best

Cælius
Rhodi-
ginus.

* Ginguéné, vi. 183. 218., has given a full analysis of these celebrated comedies. They are placed next to those of Machiavel by most Italian critics.

† *Regole grammaticali delle volgar lingua.* (Ancona, 1516.) Questo libro fuor di dubbio è

stato il primo che si videsse stampato, a darne insegnamenti d'Italiana, non già eloquenza, ma lingua. Fontanini dell' *eloquenza Italiana*, p. 5. Fifteen editions were printed within six years; a decisive proof of the importance attached to the subject.

and most extensive collection hitherto made from the stores of antiquity. It is now hardly remembered ; but obtained almost universal praise, even from severe critics, for the deep erudition of its author, who, in a somewhat rude style, pours forth explanations of obscure, and emendations of corrupted passages, with profuse display of knowledge in the customs and even philosophy of the ancients, but more especially in medicine and botany. Yet he seems to have inserted much without discrimination of its value, and often without authority. A more perfect edition was published in 1550, extending to thirty books instead of sixteen.*

26. It may be seen, that Italy, with all the lustre of Leo's reputation, was not distinguished by any very remarkable advance in learning during his pontificate; and I believe it is generally admitted, that the elegant biography of Roscoe, in making the public more familiar with the subject, did not raise the previous estimation of its hero and of his times. Meanwhile the cisalpine regions were gaining ground upon their brilliant neighbour. From the Parisian press issued in these ten years eight hundred books; among which were a Greek Lexicon by Aleander, in 1512, and four more little grammatical works, with a short romance in Greek. This is trifling indeed; but in the cities on the Rhine something more was done in that language. A Greek grammar, probably quite elementary, was published at Witten-

Greek
printed in
France and
Germany.

* Blount. Biogr. Univ., art. Rhodiginus.

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berg in 1511; one at Strasburg in 1512,—thrice reprinted in the next three years. These were succeeded by a translation of Theodore Gaza's grammar by Erasmus, in 1516, by the *Progymnasmata Græcæ Literaturæ* of Luscinius, in 1517, and by the *Introductiones in Linguam Græcam* of Croke, in 1520. Isocrates and Lucian appeared at Strasburg in 1515; the first book of the *Iliad* next year, besides four smaller tracts*; several more followed before the end of the decad. At Basle the excellent printer Frobenius, an intimate friend of Erasmus, had established himself as early as 1491.† Besides the great edition of the New Testament by Erasmus, which issued from his press, we find, before the close of 1520, the *Works and Days* of Hesiod, the *Greek Lexicon* of Aldus, the *Rhetoric and Poetics* of Aristotle, the first two books of the *Odyssey*, and several grammatical treatises. At Cologne two or three small Greek pieces were printed in 1517. And Louvain, besides the *Plutus* of Aristophanes in 1518, and three or four others about the same time, sent forth in the year 1520 six Greek editions, among which were Lucian, Theocritus, and two tragedies of Euripides.‡ We may hence perceive, that the

* These were published by Luscinius (Nachtigall), a native of Strasburg, and one of the chief members of the literary academy, established by Wimpfeling in that city. Biogr. Univ.

† Biogr. Univ.

‡ The whole number of books, according to Panzer, printed from 1511 to 1520 at Strasburg, was

373; at Basle, 289; at Cologne, 120; at Leipsic, 462; at Louvain, 57. It may be worth while to remind the reader once more that these lists must be very defective as to the slighter class of publications, which have often perished to a single copy. Panzer is reckoned more imperfect after 1500 than before. Biogr. Universelle. In

Greek language now first became generally known and taught in Germany and in the Low Countries.

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27. It is evident that these works were chiefly designed for students in the universities. But it is to be observed, that Greek literature was now much more cultivated than before. In France there were, indeed, not many names that could be brought forward; but Lefevre of Etaples, commonly called Faber Stapulensis, was equal to writing criticisms on the Greek Testament of Erasmus. He bears a high character among contemporary critics for his other writings, which are chiefly on theological and philosophical subjects; but it appears by his age that he must have come late to the study of Greek.* That difficult language was more easily mastered by younger men. Germany had already produced some deserving of remembrance. A correspondent of Erasmus, in 1515, writes to recommend Œcolampadius as "not unlearned in Greek literature."† Melancthon was, even in his early youth, deemed competent to criticise Erasmus himself. At the age of sixteen, he lectured on the Greek and Latin authors of antiquity. He was the first who printed Terence as verse.‡ The library of this great

Greek
scholars in
these coun-
tries.

England, we find thirty-six by Pynson, and sixty-six by Wynkyn de Worde within these ten years.

* Jortin's Erasmus, i. 92. Bayle, Fevre d'Etaples. Blount. Biogr. Univ., Febure d'Etaples.

† Erasmus himself says afterwards, Œcolampadius satis novit

Græcè, Latini sermonis rudior; quanquam ille magis peccat indiligentia quam imperitia.

‡ Cox's Life of Melancthon, p. 19. Melancthon wrote Greek verse indifferently and incorrectly, but Latin with spirit and elegance: specimens of both are given in Dr. Cox's valuable biography.

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scholar was in 1835 sold in London, and was proved to be his own by innumerable marginal notes of illustration and correction. Beatus Rhenanus stands perhaps next to him as a scholar; and we may add the names of Luscinius, of Bilibald Pirckheimer, a learned senator of Nuremberg, who made several translations, and of Petrus Mosellanus, who became about 1518 lecturer in Greek at Leipsic.* He succeeded our distinguished countryman, Richard Croke, a pupil of Grocyn, who had been invited to Leipsic in 1514, with the petty salary of 15 guilders, but with the privilege of receiving other remuneration from his scholars, and had the signal honour of first imbuing the students of northern Germany with a knowledge of that language.† One or two trifling works on Greek grammar were published by Croke during this decennium. Ceratinus, who took his name, in the fanciful style of the times, from his birthplace, Horn in Holland, was now professor of Greek at

* The lives and characters of Rhenanus, Pirckheimer, and Mosellanus, will be found in Blount, Nicéron, and the *Biographie Universelle*; also in Gerdes's *Historia Evangel. Renov.*, Melchior Adam, and other less common books.

† *Crocus regnat in Academia Lipsiensi, publicitus Græcas docens litteras.* Erasm. *Epist.* clvii. 5th June 1514. Eichhorn says, that Conrad Celtes and others had taught Latin only, iii. 272. Camerarius, who studied for three years under Croke, gives him a very high character; *qui primus putabatur ita docuisse Græcam linguam in Germania, ut plane perdisci illam posse, et quid momenti ad omnem doctrinæ erudi-*

tionem atque cultum hujus cognitio allatura esse videretur, nostri homines sese intelligere arbitrarentur. Vita Melanchthonis, p. 27.; and Vita Eobani Hessi, p. 4. He was received at Leipsic "like a heavenly messenger;" every one was proud of knowing him, of paying whatever he demanded, of attending him at any hour of the day or night. Melanchthon *apud Meiners*, i. 163. A pretty good life of Croke is in Chalmers's *Biographical Dictionary*. Bayle does not mention him. Croke was educated at King's College, Cambridge, to which he went from Eton in 1506, and is said to have learned Greek at Oxford from Grocyn, while still a scholar of King's.

Louvain ; and in 1525, on the recommendation of Erasmus, became the successor of Mosellanus at Leipsic.* William Cop, a native of Basle, and physician to Francis I., published in this period some translations from Hippocrates and Galen.

28. Cardinal Ximenes, about the beginning of the century founded a college at Alcala, his favourite university, for the three learned languages. This example was followed by Jerome Busleiden, who by his last testament, in 1516 or 1517, established a similar foundation at Louvain.† From this source proceeded many men of conspicuous erudition and ability ; and Louvain, through its Collegium trilingue, became in a still higher degree than Deventer had been in the fifteenth century not only the chief seat of Belgian learning, but the means of diffusing it over parts of Germany. Its institution was resisted by the monks and theologians, unyielding though beaten adversaries of literature.‡

Colleges
at Alcala
and Lou-
vain.

29. It cannot be said, that many yet on this side of the Alps wrote Latin well. Budæus is harsh and unpolished ; Erasmus fluent, spirited, and never at a loss to express his meaning ; nor is his style much defaced by barbarous words, though by no means exempt from them ; yet it seldom reaches a point of classical elegance. Francis Sylvius

Latin style
in France.

* Erasmus gives a very high character of Ceratinus. Græcæ linguæ peritia superat vel tres Mosellanos, nec inferior, ut arbitror, Romanæ linguæ facundia. Epist. dcccxxxvii. Ceratinus Græcanicæ literaturæ tam exacte callens, ut vix unum aut alterum habeat Italia quicum dubitem hanc committere.

Magnæ doctrinæ erat Mosellanus, spei majoris, et amabam unicè hominis ingenium, nec falso dicunt odiosas esse comparationes ; sed hoc ipsa causa me compellit dicere, longe aliares est. Epist. dcccxxxviii.

† Bayle, Busleiden.

‡ Von der Hardt, Hist. Litt. Reformat.

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(probably Dubois), brother of a celebrated physician, endeavoured to inspire a taste for purity of style in the university of Paris. He had, however, acquired it himself late, for some of his writings are barbarous. The favourable influence of Sylvius was hardly earlier than 1520.* The writer most solicitous about his diction was Longolius (Christopher de Longueil), a native of Malines, the only true Ciceronian out of Italy; in which country, however, he passed so much time, that he is hardly to be accounted a mere cisalpine. Like others of that denomination, he was more ambitious of saying common things well, than of producing what was well worthy of being remembered.

Greek
scholars in
England.

30. We have the imposing testimony of Erasmus himself, that neither France nor Germany stood so high about this period as England. That country, he says, so distant from Italy, stands next to it in the esteem of the learned. This, however, is written in 1524. About the end of the present decennial period we can produce a not very small number of persons possessing a competent acquaintance with the Greek tongue, more, perhaps, than could be traced in France, though all together might not weigh as heavy as Budæus alone. Such were Grocyn, the patriarch of English learning, who died in 1519; Linacre, whose translation of Galen, first printed in 1521, is one of the few in that age that escape censure for inelegance or incorrectness; Latimer, beloved and admired by his

* Bayle, art. Sylvius.

friends, but of whom we have no memorial in any writings of his own ; More, known as a scholar by Greek epigrams of some merit* ; Lilly, master of St. Paul's school, who had acquired Greek at Rhodes, but whose reputation is better preserved by the grammars that bear his name ; Lupsett, who is said to have learned from Lilly, and who taught some time at Oxford ; Richard Croke, already named ; Gerard Lister, a physician, to whom Erasmus gives credit for skill in the three languages ; Pace and Tunstall, both men well known in the history of those times ; Lee and Stokesley, afterwards bishops, the former of whom published Annotations on the Greek Testament of Erasmus at Basle in 1520 †, and probably Gardiner ; Clement, one of Wolsey's first lecturers at Oxford ‡ ; Brian,

* The Greek verses of More and Lilly, *Progymnasmata Mori et Lillii*, were published at Basle, 1518. It is in this volume that the distich, about which some curiosity has been shown, is found ; *Inveni portum, spes et fortuna valete*, &c. But it is a translation from the Greek.

Quid tandem non præstitisset admirabilis ista naturæ felicitas, si hoc ingenium instituisset Italia ? si totum Musarum sacris vacasset ? si ad justam frugem ac velut autumnum suum maturuisset ? Epigrammata lusit adolescens admodum, ac pleraque puer ; Britanniam suam nunquam egressus est, nisi semel atque iterum principis sui nomine legatione functus apud Flandros. Præter rem uxoriam, præter curas domesticas, præter publici muneris functionem et causarum undas, tot tantisque regni negotiis distrahitur, ut mireris esse otium vel cogitandi de libris.

Epist. clxix. Aug. 1517. In the Ciceronianus he speaks of More with more discriminating praise, and the passage is illustrative of that just quoted.

† Erasmus does not spare Lee. Epist. ccxlviii. *Quo uno nihilunquam adhuc terra produxit, nec arrogantius, nec virulentius, nec stultius.* This was the tone of the age towards any adversary, who was not absolutely out of reach of such epithets. In another place, he speaks of Lee as *nuper Græca linguæ rudimentis initiatus.* Ep. cccclxxxix.

‡ Knight says (apud Jortin, i. 45.) that Clement was the first lecturer at Oxford in Greek after Linacre, and that he was succeeded by Lupsett. And this seems, as to the fact that they did successively teach, to be confirmed by More. Jortin, ii. 396. But the *Biographia Britannica*, art. Wolsey, asserts that they were appointed to

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Wakefield, Bullock, and a few more, whose names appear in Pits and Wood, or even who are not recorded; for we could not without presumption attempt to enumerate every person who at this time was not wholly unacquainted with the Greek language. Yet it would be an error, on the other hand, to make a large allowance for omissions; much less to conclude that every man who might enjoy some reputation in a learned profession could in a later generation have passed for a scholar. Colet, for example, and Fisher, men as distinguished as almost any of that age, were unacquainted with the Greek tongue, and both made some efforts to attain it at an advanced age.* It was not till the year 1517 that the first Greek lecture was established at Oxford by Fox, bishop of Hereford, in his new foundation of Corpus Christi College. Wolsey, in 1519, endowed a regular professorship in the university. It was about the same year that Fisher, chancellor of the

the chair of rhetoric or humanity; and that Calpurnius, a native of Greece, was the first professor of the language. No authority is quoted by the editors; but I have found it confirmed by Caius in a little treatise *De Pronuntiatione Græcæ et Latinæ Linguae*. Novit, he says, *Oxoniensis schola, quemadmodum ipsa Græcia pronuntiavit, ex Matthæo Calpurnio Græco, quem ex Græciâ Oxoniam Græcarum literarum gratia perduxerat Thomas Wolseus, de bonis literis optime meritis cardinalis, cum non alia ratione pronuntiant illi, quam quâ nos jam profitemur. Caius de pronunt. Græc. et Lat. Linguae, edit. Jebb, p. 228.*

* *Nunc dolor me tenet, says Colet in 1516, quod non didicerim Græcum sermonem, sine cujus peritia nihil sumus.* From a later epistle of Erasmus, where he says, *Coletus strenue Græcatur*, it seems likely that he actually made some progress; but at his age it would not be very considerable. Latimer dissuaded Fisher from the attempt, unless he could procure a master from Italy, which Erasmus thought needless. *Epist. cccxliii.* In an edition of his *Adages*, he says, *Joannes Fischerus tres linguas ætate jam vergente non vulgari studio amplectitur, Chil. iv Cent. v. l.*

university of Cambridge, sent down Richard Croke, lately returned from Leipsic, to tread in the footsteps of Erasmus as teacher of Greek.* But this was in advance of our neighbours; for no public instruction in that language was yet given in France.

Mode of
teaching in
schools.

31. By the statutes of St. Paul's school, dated in 1518, the master is to be "lerved in good and clene Latin literature, and also in Greke, iff such may be gotten." Of the boys he says, "I wolde they were taught always in good literature both Latin and Greke." But it does not follow from hence that Greek was actually taught; and considering the want of lexicons and grammars, none of which, as we shall see, were published in England for many years afterwards, we shall be apt to think that little instruction could have been given.† This, however,

* Greek had not been neglected at Cambridge during the interval, according to a letter of Bullock (in Latin Bovillus) to Erasmus in 1516 from thence. *Hic acriter incumbunt literis Græcis, optantque non mediocriter tuum adventum, et hi magnopere favent tuæ huic in Novum Testamentum editioni.* It is probable that Cranmer was a pupil of Croke; for in the deposition of the latter before Mary's commissioners in 1555, he says that he had known the archbishop thirty-six years, which brings us to his own first lectures at Cambridge. Todd's *Life of Cranmer*, ii. 449. But Cranmer may have known something of the language before, and is, not improbably, one of those to whom Bullock alludes.

† In a letter of Erasmus on the death of Colet in 1522, Epist.

ccccxxv (and in Jortin's App., ii. 315.) though he describes the course of education at St. Paul's school rather diffusely, and in a strain of high panegyric, there is not a syllable of allusion to the study of Greek. Pits, however, in an account of one William Horman, tells us, that he was ad collegium Etonense studiorum causa missus, ubi avidè haus-tis litteris humanioribus, *perceptisque Græcæ linguæ rudimentis*, dignus habitus est qui Cantabrigiam ad altiores disciplinas destinaretur. Horman became Græcæ linguæ peritissimus, and returned, as head master, to Eton; quo tempore in litteris humanioribus scholares illic insigniter erudit. He wrote several works, partly grammatical, of which Pits gives the titles, and died, *plenus dierum*, in 1535.

If we could depend on the ac-

CHAP.
IV.

is not conclusive, and would lead us to bring down the date of philological learning in our public seminaries much too low. The process of learning without books was tedious and difficult, but not impracticable for the diligent. The teacher provided himself with a lexicon which was in common use among his pupils, and with one of the grammars published on the Continent, from which he gave oral lectures, and portions of which were transcribed by each student. The books read in the lecture-room were probably copied out in the same manner, the abbreviations giving some facility to a cursive hand; and thus the deficiency of impressions was in some degree supplied, just as before the invention of printing. The labour of acquiring knowledge strengthened, as it always does, the memory; it excited an industry which surmounted every obstacle, and yielded to no fatigue; and we may thus account for that copiousness of verbal learning which sometimes astonishes us in the scholars of the sixteenth century, and in which they seem to surpass the more exact philologists of later ages.

Few classical works
printed
here.

32. It is to be observed, that we rather extol a small number of men who have struggled against difficulties, than put in a claim for any diffusion of

curacy of all this, we must suppose that Greek was taught at Eton so early, that one who acquired the rudiments of it in that school might die at an advanced age in 1535. But this is not to be received on Pits's authority. And I find, in Harwood's Alumni Etonenses, that Horman became head

master as early as 1485: no one will readily believe, that he could have learned Greek while at school; and the fact is, that he was not educated at Eton, but at Winchester.

The Latin grammar which bears the name of Lilly was compiled partly by Colet, partly by Erasmus.

literature in England, which would be very far from the truth. No classical works were printed, except four editions of Virgil's *Bucolics*, a small treatise of Seneca, the first book of Cicero's *Epistles* (the latter at Oxford in 1519), all merely of course for learners. We do not reckon Latin grammars. And as yet no Greek types had been employed. In the spirit of truth, we cannot quite take to ourselves the compliment of Erasmus; there must evidently have been a far greater diffusion of sound learning in Germany; where professors of Greek had for some time been established in all the universities, and where a long list of men ardent in the cultivation of letters could be adduced.* Erasmus had a panegyric humour towards his friends, of whom there were many in England.

33. Scotland had, as might naturally be expected, partaken still less of Italian light than the south of Britain. But the reigning king, contemporary with Henry VII., gave proofs of greater good-will towards letters. A statute of James IV., in 1496, enacts that gentlemen's sons should be sent to school, in order to learn Latin. Such provisions were too indefinite for execution, even if the royal authority had been greater than it was; but it serves to display the temper of the sovereign. His natural son, Alexander, on whom, at a very early age, he conferred the archbishopric of St. Andrews, was the pupil of Erasmus in the Greek language. The latter speaks very highly of this

State of
learning in
Scotland.

* Such a list is given by Meiners, i. 154., of the supporters of Reuchlin; who comprised all the real scholars of Germany: he enumerates sixty-seven, which might doubtless be enlarged.

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promising scion of the house of Stuart in one of his adages.* But, at the age of twenty, he perished with his royal father on the disastrous day of Flodden Field. Learning had made no sensible progress in Scotland; and the untoward circumstances of the next twenty years were far from giving it encouragement. The translation of the *Æneid* by Gawin Douglas, bishop of Dunkeld, though we are not at present on the subject of poetry, may be here mentioned in connection with Scottish literature. It was completed about 1513, though the earliest edition is not till 1553. "This translation," says Warton, "is executed with equal spirit and fidelity; and is a proof that the Lowland Scotch and English languages were now nearly the same. I mean the style of composition, more especially in the glaring affectation of anglicising Latin words. The several books are introduced with metrical prologues, which are often highly poetical, and show that Douglas's proper walk was original poetry." Warton did well to explain his rather startling expression, that the Lowland Scotch and English languages were then nearly the same; for I will venture to say, that no Englishman, without guessing at every other word, could understand the long passage he proceeds to quote from Gawin Douglas. It is true that the differences consisted mainly in pronunciation, and consequently in orthography; but this is the great cause of diversity in dialect. The character of Douglas's original poetry seems to be that of the middle ages in

* Chil. ii. cent. v. l.

general,—prolix, though sometimes animated, description of sensible objects. *

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34. We must not leave England without mention of the only work of genius that she can boast in this age; the Utopia† of Sir Thomas More. Perhaps we scarcely appreciate highly enough the spirit and originality of this fiction, which ought to be considered with regard to the barbarism of the times, and the meagreness of preceding inventions. The republic of Plato no doubt furnished More with the germ of his perfect society; but it would be unreasonable to deny him the merit of having struck out the fiction of its real existence from his own fertile imagination; and it is manifest, that some of his most distinguished successors in the same walk of romance, especially Swift, were largely indebted to his reasoning, as well as inventive talents. Those who read the Utopia in Burnet's translation, may believe that they are in Brobdignag; so similar is the vein of satirical humour and easy language. If false and impracticable theories are found in the Utopia (and perhaps he knew them to be such), this is in a much greater degree true of the Platonic republic; and they are more than compensated by the sense of justice and humanity that pervades it, and his bold censures on the vices of power. These are remarkable in a courtier of Henry VIII.; but, in the first years of Nero, the voice of Seneca was heard without resentment. Nor had Henry much

Utopia of
More.

* Warton, iii. 111.

† Utopia is named from a king Utopus. I mention this, because

some have shown their learning by changing the word to Eutopia.

CHAP. to take to himself in the reprehension of parsimo-
IV. nious accumulation of wealth, which was meant
for his father's course of government.

His incon-
sistency
with his
opinions.

35. It is possible that some passages in the Utopia, which are neither philosophical nor reconcilable with just principles of morals, were thrown out as mere paradoxes of a playful mind; nor is it easy to reconcile his language as to the free toleration of religious worship with those acts of persecution which have raised the only dark cloud on the memory of this great man. He positively indeed declares for punishing those who insult the religion of others, which might be an excuse for his severity towards the early reformers. But his latitude as to the acceptability of all religions with God, as to their identity in essential principles, and as to the union of all sects in a common worship, could no more be made compatible with his later writings or conduct, than his sharp satire against the court of Rome for breach of faith, or against the monks and friars for laziness and beggary. Such changes, however, are very common, as we may have abundantly observed, in all seasons of revolutionary commotions. Men provoke these, sometimes in the gaiety of their hearts with little design, sometimes with more deliberate intention, but without calculation of the entire consequences, or of their own courage to encounter them. And when such men, like More, are of very quick parts, and, what is the usual attendant of quick parts, not very retentive of their opinions, they have little difficulty in abandoning any speculative notion, especially when, like those

in the *Utopia*, it can never have had the least influence upon their behaviour. We may acknowledge, after all, that the *Utopia* gives us the impression of its having proceeded rather from a very ingenious than a profound mind; and this, apparently, is what we ought to think of Sir Thomas More. The *Utopia* is said to have been first printed at Louvain in 1516*; it certainly appeared at the close of the preceding year; but the edition of Basle in 1518, under the care of Erasmus, is the earliest that bears a date. It was greatly admired on the Continent; indeed there had been little or nothing of equal spirit and originality in Latin since the revival of letters.

36. The French themselves give Francis I. the credit of having been the father of learning in that country. Galland, in a funeral panegyric on that prince, asks if at his accession (in 1513) any one man in France could read Greek or write Latin? Now this is an absurd question, when we recollect the names of Budæus, Longolius, and Faber Stapulensis; yet it shows that there could have been very slender pretensions to classical learning in the kingdom. Erasmus, in his *Cicero-*

Learning
restored in
France.

* Of an undated edition, to which Panzer gives the name of *editio princeps*, there is a copy in the British Museum, and another was in Mr. Heber's library. Dibdin's *Utopia*, 1808, preface, cxi. It appears from a letter of Montjoy to Erasmus, dated 4th Jan. 1516, that he had received the *Utopia*, which must therefore have been printed in 1515; and it was reprinted once at least in 1516 or 1517. *Erasm. Epist.*, cciii. ccv.

Append. Ep. xliv. lxxix. ccli. et alibi. Panzer mentions one at Louvain in December 1516. This volume by Dr. Dibdin is a reprint of Robinson's early and almost contemporary translation. That by Burnet, 1685, is more known, and I think it good. Burnet, and I believe some of the Latin editions, omit a specimen of the Utopian language, and some Utopian poetry; which probably was thought too puerile.

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IV.

nianus, enumerates among French scholars, not only Budæus, Faber, and the eminent printer Jodocus Badius (a Fleming by birth), whom, in point of style, he seems to put above Budæus, but John Pin, Nicolas Berald, Francis Deloin, Lazarus Baif, and Ruel. This was however in 1529, and the list assuredly is not long. But as his object was to show that few men of letters were worthy of being reckoned fine writers, he does not mention Longueil, who was one; or whom, perhaps, he might omit, as being then dead.

Jealousy of
Erasmus
and
Budæus.

37. Budæus and Erasmus were now at the head of the literary world; and as the friends of each behaved rather too much like partizans, a kind of rivalry in public reputation began, which soon extended to themselves, and lessened their friendship. Erasmus seems to have been, in a certain degree, the aggressor; at least some of his letters to Budæus indicate an irritability, which the other, as far as appears, had not provoked. Budæus had published in 1514 an excellent treatise *De Asse*, the first which explained the denominations and values of Roman money in all periods of history.* Erasmus sometimes alludes to this with covert jealousy. It was set up by a party against his *Adages*, which he justly considered more full of original thoughts and extensive learning. But Budæus understood Greek better; he had learned it with prodigious labour, and probably about the same time with Erasmus, so that the comparison

* Quod opus ejus, says Vives, in a letter to Erasmus (Ep. DCX.), Hermolaos omnes, Picos, Politianos, Gazas, Vallas, cunctam Italianam pudefecit.

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* Epist. cc.
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between them was not unnatural. The name of one is at present only retained by scholars, and that of the other by all mankind; so different is contemporary and posthumous reputation. It is just to add that, although Erasmus had written to Budæus in far too sarcastic a tone*, under the smart of that literary sensitiveness which was very strong in his temper, yet when the other began to take serious offence, and to threaten a discontinuance of their correspondence, he made amends by an affectionate letter, which ought to have restored their good understanding. Budæus, however, who seems to have kept his resentments longer than his quick-minded rival, continued to write peevish letters; and fresh circumstances arose afterwards to keep up his jealousy.†

* Epist. cc. I quote the numeration of the Leyden edition.

† *Erasmi Epistolæ*, passim. The publication of his *Ciceronianus* in 1528, renewed the irritation; in this he gave a sort of preference to Badius over Budæus, in respect to style alone; observing that the latter had great excellences of another kind. The French scholars made this a national quarrel, pretending that Erasmus was prejudiced against their country. He defends himself in his epistles so prolixly and elaborately, as to confirm the suspicion, not of this absurdly imputed dislike to the French, but of some little desire to pique Budæus. Epigrams in Greek were written at Paris against him by Lascaris and Toussain; and thus Erasmus, by an unlucky inability to restrain his pen from sly sarcasm, multiplied the enemies, whom an opposite part of his character, its spirit

of temporising and timidity, was always raising up. *Erasm. Epist. lxxxi. et alibi.*

This rather unpleasing correspondence between two great men, professing friendship, yet covertly jealous of each other, is not ill described by Von der Hardt; in the *Historia Litteraria Reformationis*. *Mirum dictu, qui undique aculei, sub mellitissima oratione, inter blandimenta continua. Genius utriusque argutissimus, qui vellendo et acerbè puniendo nullibi videretur referre sanguinem aut vulnus inferre. Possint profecto hæ literæ Budæum inter et Erasmum illustre esse et incomparabile exemplar delicatissimæ sed et perquam aculeatæ concertationis, quæ videretur suavissimo absolvi risu et velut familiarissimo palpo. De alterutrius integritate neuter visus dubitare; uterque tamen semper auceps, tot annis commercio frequentissimo. Dissimulandi artifi-*

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IV.Character
of Erasmus.

38. Erasmus diffuses a lustre over his age, which no other name among the learned supplies. The qualities which gave him this superiority were his quickness of apprehension, united with much industry, his liveliness of fancy, his wit and good sense. He is not a very profound thinker, but an acute observer; and the age for original thinking was hardly come. What there was of it in More produced little fruit. In extent of learning, no one perhaps was altogether his equal. Budæus, with more accurate scholarship, knew little of theology, and might be less ready perhaps in general literature than Erasmus. Longolius, Sadolet, and several others, wrote Latin far more elegantly; but they were of comparatively superficial erudition, and had neither his keen wit, nor his vigour of intellect. As to theological learning, the great Lutheran divines must have been at least his equals in respect of scriptural knowledge, and some of them possessed an acquaintance with Hebrew, of which Erasmus knew nothing; but he had probably the advantage in the study of the fathers. It is to be observed, that by far the greater part of his writings are theological. The rest either belong to philology and ancient learning, as the *Adages*, the *Ciceronianus*, and the various grammatical treatises, or may be reckoned effusions of his wit, as the *Colloquies* and the *Encomium Moriæ*.

His *Adages*
severe on
kings.

39. Erasmus, about 1517, published a very en-

cium inexplicabile, quod attentis lectoris admirationem vehat, eum- que præ dissertationum dulcedine subamara in stuporem vertat. p. 46.

larged edition of his Adages, which had already grown with the growth of his own erudition. It is impossible to distinguish the progressive accessions they received without a comparison of editions; and some probably belong to a later period than the present. The Adages, as we read them, display a surprising extent of intimacy with Greek and Roman literature.* Far the greater portion is illustrative; but Erasmus not unfrequently sprinkles his explanations of ancient phrase with moral or literary remarks of some poignancy. The most remarkable, in every sense, are those which reflect with excessive bitterness and freedom on kings and priests. Jortin has slightly alluded to some of these; but they may deserve more particular notice, as displaying the character of the man, and perhaps the secret opinions of his age.

40. Upon the adage, *Frons occipitio prior*, meaning, that every one should do his own business, Erasmus takes the opportunity to observe, that no one requires more attention to this than a prince, if he will act as a real prince, and not as a robber. But at present our kings and bishops are only the hands, eyes, and ears of others, careless of the state, and of every thing but their own pleasure.† This, however, is a trifle. In another proverb, he bursts out: “Let any one turn over the pages of ancient or

Instances
in illus-
tration.

* In one passage, under the proverb, *Herculei labores*, he expatiates on the immense labour with which this work, his Adages, had been compiled; mentioning, among other difficulties, the prodigious corruption of the text in

all Latin and Greek manuscripts, so that it scarce ever happened that a passage could be quoted from them, without a certainty or suspicion of some erroneous reading.

† Chil. i. cent. ii. 19.

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modern history, scarcely in several generations will you find one or two princes, whose folly has not inflicted the greatest misery on mankind." And after much more of the same kind: "I know not whether much of this is not to be imputed to ourselves. We trust the rudder of a vessel, where a few sailors and some goods alone are in jeopardy, to none but skilful pilots; but the state, wherein the safety of so many thousands is concerned, we put into any hands. A charioteer must learn, reflect upon, and practise his art; a prince need only be born. Yet government, as it is the most honourable, so is it the most difficult of all sciences. And shall we choose the master of a ship, and not choose him, who is to have the care of many cities, and so many souls? But the usage is too long established for us to subvert. Do we not see that noble cities are erected by the people; that they are destroyed by princes? that the community grows rich by the industry of its citizens, is plundered by the rapacity of its princes? that good laws are enacted by popular magistrates, are violated by these princes? that the people love peace; that princes excite war?"*

* Quin omnes et veterum et neotericorum annales evolve, nimirum ita comperies, vix sæculis aliquot unum aut alterum extitisse principem, qui non insigni stultitiâ maximam perniciem invexerit rebus humanis. . . Et haud scio, an nonnulla hujus mali pars nobis ipsis sit imputanda. Clavum navis non committimus nisi ejus rei perito, quod quatuor vectorum aut paucarum mercium sit periculum; et republicam, in qua tot hominum

millia periclitantur, cuivis committimus. Ut auriga fiat aliquis discit artem, exercet, meditatur; at ut princeps sit aliquis, satis esse putamus natum esse. Atqui rectè gerere principatum, ut est munus omnium longe pulcherrimum, ita est omnium etiam multo difficillimum. Deligis, cui navem committas, non deligis cui tot urbes, tot hominum capita credas? Sed istud receptius est, quam ut convelli possit.

41. "It is the aim of the guardians of a prince," he exclaims in another passage, "that he may never become a man. The nobility, who fatten on public calamity, endeavour to plunge him into pleasures, that he may never learn what is his duty. Towns are burned, lands are wasted, temples are plundered, innocent citizens are slaughtered, while the prince is playing at dice, or dancing, or amusing himself with puppets, or hunting, or drinking. O race of the Bruti, long since extinct! O blind and blunted thunderbolts of Jupiter! We know indeed that those corrupters of princes will render account to Heaven, but not easily to us." He passes soon afterwards to bitter invective against the clergy, especially the regular orders.*

42. In explaining the adage, *Sileni Alcibiadis*, referring to things which, appearing mean and trifling, are really precious, he has many good remarks on persons and things, of which the secret worth is not understood at first sight. But thence passing over to what he calls *inversi Sileni*, those who seem great to the vulgar, and are really despicable, he expatiates on kings and priests, whom

An non videmus egregia oppida a populo condi, a principibus subverti? rempublicam civium industria ditescere, principum rapacitate spoliari? bonas leges ferri a plebeiis magistratibus, a principibus violari? populum studere paci, principes excitare bellum?

* Miro studio curant tutores, ne unquam vir sit princeps. Adnituntur optimates, ii qui publicis malis saginantur, ut voluptatibus sit quam effæminatissimus, ne quid eorum sciat, quæ maxime decet

scire principem. Exuruntur vici, vastantur agri, diripiuntur templa, trucidantur immeriti cives, sacra profanaque miscentur, dum princeps interim otiosus ludit aleam, dum saltitat, dum oblectat se morionibus, dum venatur, dum amat, dum potat. O Brutorum genus jam olim extinctum! o fulmen Jovis aut cæcum aut obtusum! Neque dubium est, quin isti principum corruptores pœnas Deo daturi sint, sed sero nobis.

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he seems to hate with the fury of a modern philosopher. It must be owned he is very prolix and declamatory. He here attacks the temporal power of the church with much plainness ; we cannot wonder that his *Adages* required mutilation at Rome.

43. But by much the most amusing and singular of the *Adages* is *Scarabæus aquilam quærit* ; the meaning of which, in allusion to a fable that the beetle, in revenge for an injury, destroyed the eggs of the eagle, is explained to be, that the most powerful may be liable to the resentment of the weakest. Erasmus here returns to the attack upon kings still more bitterly and pointed than before. There is nothing in the *Contre un* of la Boetie, nothing, we may say, in the most seditious libel of our own time, more indignant and cutting against regal government than this long declamation : "Let any physiognomist, not a blunderer in his trade, consider the look and features of an eagle, those rapacious and wicked eyes, that threatening curve of the beak, those cruel cheeks, that stern front, will he not at once recognize the image of a king, a magnificent and majestic king ? Add to these a dark, ill-omened colour, an unpleasing, dreadful, appalling voice, and that threatening scream, at which every kind of animal trembles. Every one will acknowledge this type, who has learned how terrible are the threats of princes, even uttered in jest. At this scream of the eagle the people tremble, the senate shrinks, the nobility cringes, the judges concur, the divines are dumb, the lawyers assent, the laws and constitutions give way ;

neither right nor religion, neither justice nor humanity avail. And thus while there are so many birds of sweet and melodious song, the unpleasant and unmusical scream of the eagle alone has more power than all the rest.”*

44. Erasmus now gives the rein still more to his fancy. He imagines different animals, emblematic no doubt of mankind, in relation to his eagle. “There is no agreement between the eagle and the fox, not without great disadvantage to the vulpine race; in which however they are perhaps worthy of their fate, for having refused aid to the hares when they sought an alliance against the eagle, as is related in the Annals of Quadrupeds, from which Homer borrowed his Battle of the Frogs and Mice.”† I suppose that the foxes mean the nobility,

* Age si quis mihi physiognomon non omnino malus vultum ipsum et os aquilæ diligentius contempletur, oculos avidos atque improbos, rictum minacem, genas truculentas, frontem torvain, denique illud, quod Cyrus Persarum regem tantopere delectavit in principe γρηπών, nonne plane regium quodam simulacrum agnoscet, magnificentum et majestatis plenum. Accedit huc et color ipse funestus, teter et inauspicatus, fusco squalore nigricans. Unde etiam quod fuscum est et subnigrum, aquilum vocamus. Tum vox inamœna, terribilis, exanimatrix, ac minax ille querulusque clangor, quem nullum animantium genus non expavescit. Jam hoc symbolum protinus agnoscit, qui modo periculum fecerit, aut viderit certè, quam sint formidandæ principum minæ, vel joco prolatæ... Ad hanc, inquam, aquilæ stridorem illico pavitat omne vulgus, contrahit sese senatus, ob-servit nobilitas, obsecundant judi-

ces, silent theologi, assentantur jurisconsulti, cedunt leges, cedunt instituta; nihil valet fas nec pietas, nec æquitas nec humanitas. Cumque tam multæ sint aves non ineloquentes, tam multæ canoræ, tamque variæ sint voces ac modulatus qui vel saxa possint flectere, plus tamen omnibus valet insuavis ille et minime musicus unius aquilæ stridor.

† Nihil omnino convenit inter aquilam et vulpem, quanquam id sane non mediocri vulpinæ gentis malo; quo tamen haud scio an dignæ videri debeant, quæ quondam leporibus *συμμαχίαν* adversus aquilam petentibus auxilium negarint, ut referet in Annalibus Quadrupedum, a quibus Homerus *Βατραχομυομαχίαν* mutuatus est... Neque vero mirum quod illi parum convenit cum oloribus, ave nimirum poetica; illud mirum, ab iis sæpenumero vinci tam pugnacem belluam.

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and the hares the people. Some allusions to animals that follow I do not well understand. Another is more pleasing : “ It is not surprising,” he says, “ that the eagle agrees ill with the swans, those poetic birds ; we may wonder more, that so warlike an animal is often overcome by them.” He sums up all thus : “ Of all birds the eagle alone has seemed to wise men the apt type of royalty ; not beautiful, not musical, not fit for food ; but carnivorous, greedy, plundering, destroying, combating, solitary, hateful to all, the curse of all, and with its great powers of doing harm, surpassing them in its desire of doing it.”*

45. But the eagle is only one of the animals in the proverb. After all this bile against those the royal bird represents, he does not forget the beetles. These of course are the monks, whose picture he draws with equal bitterness and more contempt. Here, however, it becomes difficult to follow the analogy, as he runs a little wildly into mythological tales of the *Scarabæus*, not easily reduced to his purpose. This he discloses at length : “ There are a wretched class of men, of low degree, yet full of malice ; not less dingy, nor less filthy, nor less vile than beetles ; who nevertheless by a certain obstinate malignity of disposition, though they can never do good to any mortal, become frequently troublesome to the great. They frighten by their ugliness, they molest by their noise, they offend by

* *Ex universis avibus una aquila viris tam sapientibus idonea visa est, quæ regis imaginem representet, nec formosa, nec canora, nec esculenta, sed carnivora, rapax, prædatrix, populatrix, bellatrix, solitaria, invisa omnibus, pestis omnium ; quæ cum plurimum nocere possit, plus tamen velit quam possit.*

their stench ; they buzz round us, they cling to us, they lie in ambush for us, so that it is often better to be at enmity with powerful men, than to attack these beetles, whom it is a disgrace even to overcome, and whom no one can either shake off, or encounter, without some pollution.”*

46. It must be admitted, that this was not the language to conciliate ; and we might almost commiserate the sufferance of the poor beetles thus trod upon ; but Erasmus knew that the regular clergy were not to be conciliated, and resolved to throw away the scabbard. With respect to his invectives against kings, they proceeded undoubtedly, like those, less intemperately expressed, of his friend More in the *Utopia*, from a just sense of the oppression of Europe in that age by ambitious and selfish rulers. Yet the very freedom of his

* *Sunt homunculi quidam, infimæ quidem sortis, sed tamen malitiosi, non minus atri quam scarabæi, neque minus putidi, neque minus abjecti ; qui tamen pertinaci quadam ingenii malitia, cum nulli omnino mortalium prodesse possint, magnis etiam sæpenumero viris facessunt negotium. Territant nigrore, obstreperunt stridore, obtruncant fœtore ; circumvolitant, hærent, insidiantur, ut non paulo satius sit cum magnis aliquando viris similitudinem suscipere, quam hos lacerare scarabæos, quos pudeat etiam vicisse, quosque nec excutere possis, neque conflictari cum illis queas, nisi discedas contaminationis. Chil. iii. cent. vii. 1.*

In a letter to Budæus, Ep. ccli., Erasmus boasts of his *παρηγορία* in the *Adages*, naming the most poignant of them ; but says, in proverbio *αετον κανθαρος μαινεται*, plane

lusimus ingenio. This proverb, and that entitled *Sileni Alcibiadis*, had appeared before 1515 ; for they were reprinted in that year by Frobenius, separately from the other *Adages*, as appears by a letter of Beatus Rhenanus in *Appendice ad Erasm. Epist. Ep. xxviii.* Zasius, a famous jurist, alludes to them in another letter, Ep. xxvii., praising “*fluminosas disserendi undas, amplificationis immensam ubertatem.*” And this in truth is the character of Erasmus’s style. The *Sileni Alcibiadis* were also translated into English, and published by John Gough ; see Dibdin’s *Typographical Antiquities*, article 1433.

There is not a little severity in the remarks Erasmus makes on princes and nobles in the *Moriæ Encomium*. But with them he seems through life to have been a privileged person.

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animadversions seems to plead a little in favour of these tyrants, who, if they had been as thorough birds of prey as he represents them, might easily have torn to pieces the author of this somewhat outrageous declamation, whom on the contrary they honoured and maintained. In one of the passages above quoted, he has introduced, certainly in a later edition, a limitation of his tyrannicidal doctrine, if not a palinodia, in an altered key. "Princes," he says, "must be endured, lest tyranny should give way to anarchy, a still greater evil. This has been demonstrated by the experience of many states; and lately the insurrection of the German boors has taught us, that the cruelty of princes is better to be borne than the universal confusion of anarchy." I have quoted these political ebullitions rather diffusely, as they are, I believe, very little known, and have given the original in my notes, that I may be proved to have no way over-coloured the translation, and also that a fair specimen may be presented of the eloquence of Erasmus, who has seldom an opportunity of expressing himself with so much elevation, but whose rapid, fertile, and lively, though not very polished style is hardly more exhibited in these paragraphs, than in the general character of his writings.

His Greek
Testament.

47. The whole thoughts of Erasmus began now to be occupied with his great undertaking, an edition of the Greek Testament with explanatory annotations and a continued paraphrase. Valla, indeed, had led the inquiry as a commentator; and the Greek text without notes was already printed at Alcalá by direction of Cardinal Ximenes; though

this edition, commonly styled the Complutensian, did not appear till 1522. That of Erasmus was published at Basle in 1516. It is strictly therefore the princeps editio. He employed the press of Frobenius, with whom he lived in friendship. Many years of his life were spent at Basle.

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48. The public, in a general sense of the word, was hardly yet recovered enough from its prejudices to give encouragement to letters. But there were not wanting noble patrons, who, besides the immediate advantages of their favour, bestowed a much greater indirect benefit on literature, by making it honourable in the eyes of mankind. Learning, which is held pusillanimous by the soldier, unprofitable by the merchant, and pedantic by the courtier, stands in need of some countenance from those before whom all three bow down ; wherever at least, which is too commonly the case, a conscious self-respect does not sustain the scholar against the indifference or scorn of the prosperous vulgar. Italy was then, and perhaps has been ever since, the soil where literature, if it has not always most flourished, has stood highest in general estimation. But in Germany also, at this time, the emperor Maximilian, whose character is neither to be estimated by the sarcastic humour of the Italians, nor by the fond partiality of his countrymen, and especially his own, in his self-delineation of *Der Weisse König*, the Wise King, but really a brave and generous man of lively talents, Frederic, justly denominated the Wise, elector of Saxony, Joachim elector of Brandenburg, Albert archbishop of Mentz, were prominent among the friends of

Patrons of
letters in
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genuine learning. The university of Wittenberg, founded by the second of these princes in 1502, rose in this decad to great eminence, not only as the birthplace of the Reformation, but as the chief school of philological and philosophical literature. That of Frankfort on the Oder was established by the elector of Brandenburg in 1506.

Resistance
to learning.

49. The progress of learning, however, was not to be a march through a submissive country. Ignorance, which had much to lose, and was proud as well as rich, ignorance in high places, which is always incurable, because it never seeks for a cure, set itself sullenly and stubbornly against the new teachers. The Latin language, taught most barbarously through books whose very titles, *Floresta*, *Mammotrectus*, *Doctrinale puerorum*, *Gemma gemmarum*, bespeak their style *, with the

* Eichhorn, iii. 273., gives a curious list of names of these early grammars: they were driven out of the schools about this time. *Mammotrectus*, after all, is a learned word: it means, *μαμμοθρεπτος*, that is, a boy taught by his grandmother; and a boy taught by his grandmother means one taught gently.

Erasmus gives a lamentable account of the state of education when he was a boy, and probably later: *Deum immortalem! quale sæculum erat hoc, cum magno apparatu disticha Joannis Garlandini adolescentibus operosis et prolixis commentariis enarrabantur! cum ineptis versiculis dictandis, repetendis et exigendis magna pars temporis absumeretur; cum disceretur Floresta et Floretus; nam Alexandrum inter tolerabiles numerandum arbitror.*

I will take this opportunity of mentioning, that Erasmus was

certainly born in 1465, not in 1467, as Bayle asserts, whom Le Clerc and Jortin have followed. Buringi perceived this; and it may be proved by many passages in the Epistles of Erasmus. Bayle quotes a letter of Feb. 1516, wherein Erasmus says, as he transcribes it: *Ago annum undequingagesimum*. But in the Leyden edition, which is the best, I find, *Ego jam annum ago primum et quinquagesimum*. Epist. cc. Thus he says also, 15th March, 1528: *Arbitror me nunc ætatem agere, in quo M. Tullius decessit*. Some other places I have not taken down. His epitaph at Basle calls him, *jam septuagenarius*, and he died in 1536. Bayle's proofs of the birth of Erasmus in 1467 are so unsatisfactory, that I wonder how Le Clerc should have so easily acquiesced in them. The *Biographie Universelle* sets down 1467 without remark.

scholastic logic and divinity in wretched compends, had been held sufficient for all education. Those who had learned nothing else could of course teach nothing else, and saw their reputation and emoluments gone all at once by the introduction of philological literature and real science. Through all the palaces of Ignorance went forth a cry of terror at the coming light —“ A voice of weeping heard and loud lament.” The aged giant was roused from sleep, and sent his dark hosts of owls and bats to the war. One man above all the rest, Erasmus, cut them to pieces with irony or invective. They stood in the way of his noble zeal for the restoration of letters. * He began his attack in

* When the first lectures in Greek were given at Oxford about 1519, a party of students arrayed themselves, by the name of Trojans, to withstand the innovators by dint of clamour and violence, till the king interfered to support the learned side. See a letter of More giving an account of this in Jortin's Appendix, p. 662. Cambridge, it is to be observed, was very peaceable at this time, and suffered those who liked it to learn something worth knowing. The whole is so shortly expressed by Erasmus, that his words may be quoted. *Anglia duas habet Academias. . . In utraque traduntur Græcæ literæ, sed Cantabrigiæ tranquillè, quod ejus scholæ princeps sit Joannes Fischerus, episcopus Roffensis, non eruditione tantum sed et vitâ theologicâ. Verum Oxoniæ cum juvenis quidam non vulgariter doctus satis feliciter Græcè profiteretur, barbarus quispiam in populari concione magnis et atrocibus convitiis debacchari cœpit in Græcas literas. At Rex, ut non indoctus ipse, ita bonis literis favens, qui*

tum forte in propinquo erat, re per Morum et Pacæum cognitâ, denunciavit ut volentes ac lubentes Græcanicam literaturam amplectererentur. Ita rabulis impositum est silentium. Id. p. 667. See also Erasim. Epist. ccclxxx.

Antony Wood, with rather an excess of academical prejudice, insinuates that the Trojans, who waged war against Oxonian Greek, were “ Cambridge men, as it is reported.” He endeavours to exaggerate the deficiencies of Cambridge in literature at this time, as if “ all things were full of rudeness and barbarousness;” which the above letters of More and Erasmus show not to have been altogether the case. On the contrary, More says that even those who did not learn Greek contributed to pay the lecturer.

It may be worth while to lay before the reader part of two orations by Richard Croke, who had been sent down to Cambridge by bishop Fisher, chancellor of the university. As Croke seems to have left Leipsic in 1518, they

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his *Encomium Moriae*, the Praise of Folly. This was addressed to Sir Thomas More, and published

may be referred to that, or perhaps more probably the following year. It is evident that Greek was now just incipient at Cambridge.

Maittaire says of these two orations of Richard Croke: *Editio rarissima, cujusque unum duntaxat exemplar inspexisse mihi contigit.* The British Museum has a copy, which belonged to Dr. Farmer; but he must have seen another copy, for the last page of this being imperfect, he has filled it up with his own hand. The book is printed at Paris by Colinaeus in 1520.

The subject of Croke's orations, which seem not very correctly printed, is the praise of Greece and of Greek literature, addressed to those who already knew and valued that of Rome, which he shows to be derived from the other. *Quin ipsæ quoque voculationes Romanæ Græcis longe insuaviores, minusque concitatæ sunt, cum ultima semper syllaba rigeat in gravein, contraque apud Græcos et inflectatur nonnunquam et acuatur.* Croke of course spoke Greek accentually. Greek words, in bad types, frequently occur through this oration.

Croke dwells on the barbarous state of the sciences, in consequence of the ignorance of Greek. Euclid's definition of a line was so ill translated, that it puzzled all the geometers till the Greek was consulted. Medicine was in an equally bad condition; had it not been for the labours of learned men, Linacre, Cop, Ruel, quorum opera felicissime loquantur Latine Hippocrates, Galenus et Dioscorides, cum summa ipsorum invidia, qui, quod canis in præsepi, nec Græcam linguam discere ipsi voluerunt, nec aliis ut discerent permiserunt. He

then urges the necessity of Greek studies for the theologian, and seems to have no respect for the Vulgate above the original.

Turpe sanè erit, cum mercator sermonem Gallicum, Illyricum, Hispanicum, Germanicum, vel solius lucri causa avidè ediscat, vos studiosos Græcum in manus vobis traditum rejicere, quo et divitiæ et eloquentia et sapientia comparari possunt. Imo perpendite rogo viri Cantabrigienses, quo nunc in loco vestræ res sitæ sunt. Oxonienses quos ante hæc in omni scientiarum genere vicistis, ad literas Græcas perire, vigilant, jejulant, sudant et algent; nihil non faciunt ut eas occupent. Quod si contingat, actum est de fama vestra. Erigent enim de vobis tropæum nunquam succumbuturi. Habent duces præter cardinalem Cantuariensem, Wintoniensem, cæteros omnes Angliæ episcopos, excepto uno Roffensi, summo semper fautore vestro, et Eliensi, &c.

Favet præterea ipsis sancta Grocini et theologo digna severitas, Linacri πολυμαθεια et acere judicium, Tunstali non legibus magis quam utrique linguæ familiaris facundia, Stopleii triplex lingua, Mori candida et eloquentissima urbanitas, Pacei mores doctrina et ingenium, ab ipso Erasmo, optimo eruditionis censore, commendati; quem vos olim habuistis Græcarum literarum professorem, utinamque potuissetis retinere. Succedo in Erasmi locum ego, bone Deus, quam infra illum, et doctrinâ et famâ, quamquam me, ne omnino nihili fiam, principes viri, theologici doctores, jurum etiam et medicinarum, artium præterea professores innumeri, et præceptorem agnoscere, et quod plus est, a scholis ad

in 1511. Eighteen hundred copies were printed, and speedily sold; though the book wanted the attraction that some later editions possess, the curious and amusing engravings from designs of Holbein. It is a poignant satire against all professions of men, and even against princes and peers; but the chief objects are the mendicant orders of monks. "Though this sort of men," he says, "are so detested by every one, that it is reckoned unlucky so much as to meet them by accident,

ædes, ab ædibus ad scholas honorificentissime comitati perduxere. Diimeperdant, viri Cantabrigienses, si ipsi Oxonienses stipendio multorum nobilium præter victum me non invitavere. Sed ego pro mea in hanc academiam et fide et observantia, &c.

In his second oration, Croke exhorts the Cantabrigians not to give up the study of Greek. Si quisquam omnium sit qui vestræ reipublicæ bene consulere debeat, is ego sum, viri Cantabrigienses. Optime enim vobis esse cupio, et id nisi facerem, essem profecto longe ingratus. Ubi enim jacta literarum meorum fundamenta, quibus tantum tum apud nostrates, tum vero apud externos quoque principes, favoris mihi comparatum est; quibus ea fortuna, ut licet jam olim consanguineorum iniquitate paterna hæreditate sim spoliatus, ita tamen adhuc vivam, ut quibusvis meorum majorum imaginibus videar non indignus. He was probably of the ancient family of Croke. Peter Mosellanus calls him, in a letter among those of Erasmus, juvenis cum imaginibus.

Audio ego plerosque vos a literis Græcis dehortatos esse. Sed vos diligenter expendite, qui sint,

et plane non alios fore comperitis, quam qui igitur linguam oderunt Græcam, quia Romanam non norunt. Cæterum jam deprehendo quid facturi sint, qui nostras literas odio prosequuntur, confugiunt videlicet ad religionem, cui uni dicent omnia postponenda. Sentio ego cum illis, sed unde quæso orta religio, nisi è Græciâ? quid enim novum testamentum, excepto Matthæo? quid enim vetus? nunquid Deo auspice a septuaginta Græcè redditum? Oxonia est colonia vestra; uti olim non sine summa laude a Cantabrigia deducta, ita non sine summo vestro nunc dedecore, si doctrina ab ipsis vos vinci patiamini. Fuerunt olim illi discipuli vestri, nunc erunt præceptores? Utinam quo animo hæc a me dicta sunt, eo vos dicta interpretemini; crederetisque, quod est verissimum, si quoslibet alios, certe Cantabrigienses minime decere literarum Græcarum esse desertores.

The great scarcity of this tract will serve as an apology for the length of these extracts, illustrating, as they do, the commencement of classical literature in England.

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they think nothing equal to themselves, and hold it a proof of their consummate piety, if they are so illiterate as not to be able to read. And when their asinine voices bray out in the churches their psalms, which they can count, but not understand*, then it is they fancy that the ears of the saints above are enraptured with the harmony ;” and so forth.

Unpopu-
larity of
the monks.

50. In this sentence Erasmus intimates, what is abundantly confirmed by other testimony, that the mendicant orders had lost their ancient hold upon the people. There was a growing sense of the abuses prevailing in the church, and a desire for a more scriptural and spiritual religion. We have seen already that this was the case seventy years before. And in the intermediate period the exertions of a few eminent men, especially Wessel of Groningen, had not been wanting to purify the doctrines and discipline of the clergy. More popular writers assailed them with satire. Thus every thing was prepared for the blow to be struck by Luther ; better indeed than he was himself ; for it is well known that he began his attack on indulgences with no expectation or desire of the total breach with the see of Rome which ensued.†

The book
excites
odium.

51. The *Encomium Moriae* was received with applause by all who loved merriment, and all who hated the monks ; but grave men, as usual, could

* Numeratos illos quidem, sed non intellectos. I am not quite sure of the meaning.

† Seckendorf, *Hist. Lutheranismi*, p. 226. Gerdes, *Hist. Evang. sæc. xvi. renovat.* vols. i. and iii.

Milner's *Church History*, vol. iv. Mosheim, sæc. xv. et xvi. Bayle, art. Wessel. For Wessel's character as a philosopher, who boldly opposed the scholastics of his age, see Brucker, iii. 859.

not bear to see ridicule employed against grave folly and hypocrisy. A letter of one Dorpius, a man, it is said, of some merit, which may be read in Jortin's *Life of Erasmus**, amusingly complains, that while the most eminent divines and lawyers were admiring Erasmus, his unlucky Moria had spoiled all, by letting them see that he was mischievously fitting asses' ears to their heads. The same Dorpius, who seems, though not an old man, to have been a sworn vassal of the giant Ignorance, objects to any thing in Erasmus's intended edition of the Greek Testament, which might throw a slur on the accuracy of the Vulgate.

52. Erasmus was soon in a state of war with the monks; and in his second edition of the New Testament printed in 1518, the notes, it is said, are full of invectives against them. It must be confessed that he had begun the attack, without any motive of provocation, unless zeal for learning and religion is to count for such, which the parties assailed could not be expected to admit, and they could hardly thank him for "spitting on their gaberdine." No one, however, knew better how to pay his court; and he wrote to Leo X. in a style rather too adulatory, which in truth was his custom in addressing the great, and contrasts with his free language in writing about them. The custom of the time affords some excuse for this panegyric tone of correspondence, as well as for the opposite extreme of severity.

Erasmus
attacks the
monks.

53. The famous contention between Reuchlin Their con-

* ii. 336.

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tention
with
Reuchlin.

and the German monks, though it began in the preceding decennial period, belongs chiefly to the present. In the year 1509, one Pfeffercorn, a converted Jew, induced the inquisition at Cologne to obtain an order from the emperor for burning all Hebrew books except the Bible, upon the pretext of their being full of blasphemies against the Christian religion. The Jews made complaints of this injury; but before it could take place, Reuchlin, who had been consulted by the emperor, remonstrated against the destruction of works so curious and important, which, from his partiality to Cabbalistic theories, he rated above their real value. The order was accordingly superseded, to the great indignation of the Cologne inquisitors, and of all that party throughout Germany which resisted the intellectual and religious progress of mankind. Reuchlin had offended the monks by satirising them in a comedy which he permitted to be printed in 1506. But the struggle was soon perceived to be a general one; a struggle between what had been and what was to be. Meiners has gone so far as to suppose a real confederacy to have been formed by the friends of truth and learning through Germany and France, to support Reuchlin against the mendicant orders, and to overthrow, by means of this controversy, the embattled legions of ignorance.* But perhaps the passages he adduces do not prove more than their unanimity and zeal in the cause. The attention of the world was first called to it about 1513; that is, it assumed about that

* *Lebensbeschreib. i. 144. et seqq.*

time the character of a war of opinions, extending, in its principle and consequences, beyond the immediate dispute.* Several books were published on both sides; and the party in power employed its usual argument of burning what was written by its adversaries. One of these writings is still known, the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*; the production, it is said, of three authors, the principal of whom was Ulric von Hutten, a turbulent hot-headed man, of noble birth and quick parts, and a certain degree of learning, whose early death seems more likely to have spared the reformers some degree of shame, than to have deprived them of a useful supporter.† Few books have been more eagerly received than these epistles at their first appearance in 1516 ‡, which surely proceeded

* Meiners brings many proofs of the interest taken in Reuchlin, as the champion, if not the martyr, of the good cause.

† Herder, in his *Zertreute Blätter*, v. 329., speaks with unreasonable partiality of Ulric von Hutten; and Meiners has written his life with an enthusiasm which seems to me quite extravagant. Seckendorf, p. 130., more judiciously observes that he was of little use to the reformation. And Luther wrote about him in June, 1521: *Quid Huttenus petat vides. Nollem vi et cæde pro evangelio certari, ita scripsi ad hominem.* Melanchthon of course disliked such friends. *Epist. Melanchth.*, p. 45. (1647), and Camerarius, *Vita Melanchth.* Erasmus could not endure Hutten; and Hutten, when he found this out, wrote virulently against Erasmus. Jortin, as biographer of Erasmus, treats Hutten perhaps with too much contempt;

but this is nearer justice than the veneration of the modern Germans. Hutten wrote Latin pretty well, and had a good deal of wit; his satirical libels, consequently, had great circulation and popularity, which, in respect of such writings, is apt, in all ages, to produce an exaggeration of their real influence. In the mighty movement of the Reformation, the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum* had about as much effect as the *Mariage de Figaro* in the French Revolution. A dialogue severely reflecting on pope Julius II., called *Julius exclusus*, of which Jortin suspects Erasmus, in spite of his denial, ii. 595., is given by Meiners to Hutten.

‡ Meiners, in his *Life of Hutten*, *Lebensbesch.* iii. 73., inclines to fix the publication of the first part of the Epistles in the beginning of 1517: though he admits an earlier date to be not impossible.

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rather from their suitableness to the time, than from much intrinsic merit; though it must be owned that the spirit of many temporary allusions, which delighted or offended that age, is now lost in a mass of vapid nonsense and bad grammar, which the imaginary writers pour out. Erasmus, though not intimately acquainted with Reuchlin, could not but sympathise in a quarrel with their common enemies in a common cause. In the end the controversy was referred to the pope; but the pope was Leo; and it was hoped that a proposal to burn books, or to disgrace an illustrious scholar, would not sound well in his ears. But Reuchlin was disappointed, when he expected acquittal, by a mandate to supersede, or suspend, the process commenced against him by the inquisition of Cologne, which might be taken up at a more favourable time.* This dispute has always been reckoned of high importance; the victory in public opinion, though not in judicature, over the adherents to the old system prostrated them so utterly, that from this time the study of Greek and Hebrew became general among the German youth; and the cause of the Reformation was identified in their minds with that of classical literature.†

Origin of
the Reformation.

54. We are now brought, insensibly perhaps, but by necessary steps, to the great religious revo-

* Meiners, i. 197.

† Sleidan, *Hist. de la Reformat.* l. ii. Brucker, iv. 366. Mosheim. Eichhorn, iii. 238. vi. 16. Bayle, art. Hochstrat. None of these authorities are equal in fulness to Meiners, *Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter männer*, i. 98—212; which

I did not consult so early as the rest. But there is also a very copious account of the Reuchlinian controversy, including many original documents, in the second part of Von der Hardt's *Historia Literaria Reformationis*.

lution which has just been named. I approach this subject with some hesitation, well aware that impartiality is no protection against unreasonable cavilling ; but neither the history of literature, nor of human opinion upon the most important subjects, can dispense altogether with so extensive a portion of its materials. It is not required, however, in a work of this nature, to do much more than state shortly the grounds of dispute, and the changes wrought in the public mind.

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55. The proximate cause of the Reformation is well known. Indulgences, or dispensations granted by the pope from the heavy penances imposed on penitents after absolution by the old canons, and also, at least in later ages, from the pains of purgatory, were sold by the papal retailers with the most indecent extortion, and eagerly purchased by the superstitious multitude, for their own sake, or that of their deceased friends. Luther, in his celebrated theses, propounded at Wittenberg, in November 1517, inveighed against the erroneous views inculcated as to the efficacy of indulgences, and especially against the notion of the pope's power over souls in purgatory. He seems to have believed, that the dealers had exceeded their commission, and would be disavowed by the pope. This, however, was very far from being the case ; and the determination of Leo to persevere in defending all the abusive prerogatives of his see, drew Luther on to levy war against many other prevailing usages of the church, against several tenets maintained by the most celebrated doctors, against the divine right of the papal supremacy, and finally to renounce all

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communion with a power which he now deemed an antichristian tyranny. This absolute separation did not take place till he publicly burned the pope's bull against him, and the volumes of the canon law, at Wittenberg, in November 1520.

Popularity
of Luther.

56. In all this dispute Luther was sustained by a prodigious force of popular opinion. It was perhaps in the power of his sovereign, Frederic elector of Saxony, to have sent him to Rome, in the summer of 1518, according to the pope's direction. But it would have been an odious step in the people's eyes, and a little later would have been impossible. Miltitz, an envoy despatched by Leo in 1519, upon a conciliatory errand, told Luther that 25,000 armed men would not suffice to make him a prisoner, so favourable was the impression of his doctrine upon Germany. And Frederic himself, not long afterwards, wrote plainly to Rome, that a change had taken place in his country; the German people were not what they had been; there were many men of great talents and considerable learning among them, and the laity were beginning to be anxious about a knowledge of Scripture; so that unless Luther's doctrine, which had already taken root in the minds of a great many both in Germany and other countries, could be refuted by better arguments than mere ecclesiastical fulminations, the consequence must be so much disturbance in the empire, as would by no means redound to the benefit of the Holy See.* In fact, the university of

* Seckendorf. This remarkable letter will be found also in Roscoe's *Leo X.* Appendix No. 185. It bears date April 1520. See

Wittenberg was crowded with students and others, who came to hear Luther and Melancthon. The latter had at the very beginning embraced his new master's opinions. with a conviction he did not in all respects afterwards preserve. And though no overt attempts to innovate on the established ceremonies had begun in this period, before the end of 1520 several preached against them, and the whole north of Germany was full of expectation.

57. A counterpart to the reformation that Luther was thus effecting in Saxony might be found at the same instant in Switzerland, under the guidance of Zwingle. It has been disputed between the advocates of these leaders, to which the priority in the race of reform belongs. Zwingle himself declares, that in 1516, before he had heard of Luther, he began to preach the gospel at Zurich, and to warn the people against relying upon human authority.* But that is rather ambiguous, and hardly enough to substantiate his claim. In 1518, which of course is after Luther's appearance on the scene, the Swiss reformer was engaged in combating the venders of indulgences, though with less attention from the court of Rome. Like Luther, he had the support of the temporal magistrate, the council of Zurich. Upon the whole, they proceeded so nearly with equal steps, and were so little connected with each other, that it seems difficult to award either any honour of precedence.†

Simul-
taneous
reform by
Zwingle.

also a letter of Petrus Mosellanus, in Jortin's Erasmus, ii. 353.; and Luther's own letter to Leo, of March 1519.

* Zwingle apud Gerdes, i. 103.

† Milner, who is extremely partial in the whole of this history, labours to extenuate the claims of

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Reform-
ation pre-
pared be-
forehand.

58. The German nation was, in fact, so fully awakened to the abuses of the church, the disclaimer of papal sovereignty in the councils of Constance and Basle had been, so effectual in its influence on the public mind, though not on the external policy of church and state, that, if neither Luther nor Zwingli had ever been born, there can be little question that a great religious schism was near at hand. These councils were to the Reformation what the parliament of Paris was to the French Revolution. Their leaders never meant to sacrifice one article of received faith; but the little success they had in redressing what they denounced as abuses, convinced the laity that they must go much farther for themselves. What effect the invention of printing, which in Italy was not much felt in this direction, exerted upon the serious minds of the Teutonic nations, has been already intimated, and must appear to every reflecting person. And when this was followed by a more extensive acquaintance with the New Testament in the Greek language, nothing could be more natural than that inquisitive men should throw away much of what seemed the novel su-

Zwingli to independence in the preaching of reformation; and even pretends that he had not separated from the church of Rome in 1523, when Adrian VI. sent him a civil letter. But Gerdes shows at length that the rupture was complete in 1520. See also the article Zwingli in Biogr. Universelle.

The prejudice of Milner against Zwingli throughout is striking, and leads him into much unfairness.

Thus he asserts him, v. 510., to have been consenting to the capital punishment of some Anabaptists at Zurich. But, not to mention that their case was not one of mere religious dissidence, it does not by any means appear that he approved their punishment, which he merely relates as a fact. A still more gross misrepresentation occurs in p. 526.

perstructure of religion, and, what in other times such men had rarely ventured, should be encouraged by the obvious change in the temper of the multitude to declare themselves. We find that Pellican and Capito, two of the most learned scholars in western Germany, had come, as early as 1512, to reject altogether the doctrine of the real presence. We find also that Œcolampadius had begun to preach some of the protestant doctrines in 1514.* And Erasmus, who had so manifestly prepared the way for the new Reformers, continued, as it is easy to show from the uniform current of his letters, beyond the year 1520, favourable to their cause. His enemies were theirs, and he concurred in much that they preached, especially as to the exterior practices of religion. Some, however, of Luther's tenets he did not and could not approve; and he was already disgusted by that intemperance of language and conduct, which, not long afterwards, led him to recede entirely from the Protestant side.†

* Gerdes, i. 117. 124., et post. In fact the precursors of the Reformation were very numerous, and are collected by Gerdes in his first and third volumes, though he has greatly exaggerated the truth, by reckoning as such Dante and Petrarch, and all opponents of the temporal power of the papacy. Wessel may, upon the whole, be fairly reckoned among the Reformers.

† In 1519 and 1520, even in his letters to Albert archbishop of Mentz, and others by no means partial to Luther, he speaks of him very handsomely, and with little or

no disapprobation, except on account of his intemperance, though professing only a slight acquaintance with his writings. The proofs are too numerous to be cited. He says, in a letter to Zwingli, as late as 1521, *Videor mihi fere omnia docuisse, quæ docet Lutherus, nisi quod non tam atrociter, quodque abstinui a quibusdam ænigmatibus et paradoxis.* This is quoted by Gerdes, i. 153., from a collection of letters of Erasmus, published by Hottinger, but not contained in the Leyden edition. Jortin seems not to have seen them.

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Dangerous
tenets of
Luther.

59. It would not be just, probably, to give Bosuet credit in every part of that powerful delineation of Luther's theological tenets, with which he begins the History of the Variations of Protestant churches. Nothing, perhaps, in polemical eloquence is so splendid as this chapter. The eagle of Meaux is there truly seen, lordly of form, fierce of eye, terrible in his beak and claws. But he is too determined a partizan to be trusted by those who seek the truth without regard to persons and denominations. His quotations from Luther are short, and in French; I have failed in several attempts to verify the references. Yet we are not to follow the Reformer's partizans in dissembling altogether, like Isaac Milner, or in slightly censuring, as others have done, the enormous paradoxes which deform his writings, especially such as fall within the present period. In maintaining salvation to depend on faith as a single condition, he not only denied the importance, in a religious sense, of a virtuous life, but asserted that every one, who felt within himself a full assurance that his sins were remitted, (which, according to Luther, is the proper meaning of Christian faith), became incapable of sinning at all, or at least of forfeiting the favour of God, so long, but so long only, as that assurance should continue. Such expressions are sometimes said by Seckendorf and Mosheim to have been thrown out hastily, and without precision; but I fear it will be found on examination that they are very definite and clear, the want of precision and perspicuity being rather in those which are alleged as inconsistent with them, and as more consonant to

the general doctrine of the Christian church.* It must not be supposed for a moment, that Luther, whose soul was penetrated with a fervent piety, and whose integrity as well as purity of life are unquestioned, could mean to give any encouragement to a licentious disregard of moral virtue; which he valued, as in itself lovely before God as well as man, though, in the technical style of his theology, he might deny its proper obligation. But his temper led him to follow up any proposition of Scripture to every consequence that might seem to result from its literal meaning; and he fancied that to represent a future state as the motive of virtuous action, or as any way connected with human conduct, for better or worse, was derogatory to the free grace of God, and the omnipotent agency of the Spirit in converting the soul.†

* See in proof of this Luther's works, vol. i. passim (edit. 1534). The first work of Melancthon, his *Loci Communes*, published in 1519, when he followed Luther more obsequiously in his opinions than he did in after life, is equally replete with the strongest Calvinism. This word is a little awkward in this place; but I am compelled to use it, as most intelligible to the reader; and I conceive that these two reformers went much beyond the language of Augustin, which the schoolmen thought themselves bound to recognise as authority, though they might elude its spirit. I find the first edition of Melancthon's *Loci Communes* in Von der Hardt, *Historia Litteraria Reformationis*, a work which contains a great deal of curious matter. It is called by him, *opus rarissimum*, not being in the edition of Melancthon's theological works; which

some have ascribed to the art of Peucer, whose tenets were widely different.

† I am unwilling to give these pages too theological a cast by proving this statement, as I have the means of doing, by extracts from Luther's own early writings. Milner's very prolix history of this period is rendered less valuable by his disingenuous trick of suppressing all passages in these treatises of Luther which display his Antinomian paradoxes in a strong light. Whoever has read the writings of Luther up to the year 1520 inclusive, must find it impossible to contradict my assertion. In treating of an author so full of unlimited propositions as Luther, no positive proof as to his tenets can be refuted by the production of inconsistent passages.

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60. Whatever may be the bias of our minds as to the truth of Luther's doctrines, we should be careful, in considering the Reformation as a part of the history of mankind, not to be misled by the superficial and ungrounded representations which we sometimes find in modern writers. Such is this, that Luther, struck by the absurdity of the prevailing superstitions, was desirous of introducing a more rational system of religion; or, that he contended for freedom of inquiry, and the boundless privileges of individual judgment; or, what others have been pleased to suggest, that his zeal for learning and ancient philosophy led him to attack the ignorance of the monks, and the crafty policy of the church, which withstood all liberal studies.

Real ex-
planation
of them.

61. These notions are merely fallacious refinements, as every man of plain understanding, who is acquainted with the writings of the early reformers, or has considered their history, must acknowledge. The doctrines of Luther, taken altogether, are not more rational, that is, more conformable to what men, *à priori*, would expect to find in religion, than those of the church of Rome; nor did he ever pretend that they were so. As to the privilege of free inquiry, it was of course exercised by those who deserted their ancient altars, but certainly not upon any latitudinarian theory of a right to judge amiss. Nor, again, is there any foundation for imagining that Luther was concerned for the interests of literature. None had he himself, save theological; nor are there, as I apprehend, many allusions to profane studies, or any proof of his regard to them, in all his works. On the con-

trary, it is probable that both the principles of this great founder of the Reformation, and the natural tendency of so intense an application to theological controversy, checked for a time the progress of philological and philosophical literature on this side of the Alps.* Every solution of the conduct of the reformers must be nugatory, except one, that they were men absorbed by the conviction that they were fighting the battle of God. But among the population of Germany or Switzerland, there was undoubtedly another predominant feeling; the sense of ecclesiastical oppression, and scorn for the worthless swarm of monks and friars. This may be said to have divided the propagators of the Reformation into such as merely pulled down, and such as built upon the ruins. Ulric von Hutten may pass for the type of the one, and Luther himself of the other. And yet it is hardly correct to say of Luther, that he erected his system on the ruins of popery. For it was rather the growth and expansion in his mind of one positive dogma, justification by faith, in the sense he took it, (which can be easily shown to have preceded the dispute about indulgences †), that broke down and crushed

* Erasmus, after he had become exasperated with the reformers, repeatedly charges them with ruining literature. *Ubiunque regnat Lutheranismus, ibi literarum est interitus.* *Epist. mvi.* (1528). *Evangelicos istos, cum multis aliis, tum hoc nomine præcipue odi, quod per eos ubique languent, fugent, jacent, intereunt bonæ literæ, sine quibus quid est hominum vita? Amant viaticum*

et uxorem, cætera pili non faciunt. Hos fucos longissime arcendos censeo a vestro contubernio. *Ep. dcccclvi.* (eod. ann.) There were however at this time, as well as afterwards, more learned men on the side of the Reformation than on that of the church.

† See his disputations at Wittenberg, 1516; and the sermons preached in the same and the subsequent year.

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IV.Orlando
Furioso.Its popu-
larity.

successively the various doctrines of the Romish church; not because he had originally much objection to them, but because there was no longer room for them in a consistent system of theology.*

62. The laws of synchronism, which we have hitherto obeyed, bring strange partners together, and we may pass at once from Luther to Ariosto. The *Orlando Furioso* was first printed at Ferrara in 1516. This edition contained forty cantos, to which the last six were added in 1532. Many stanzas, chiefly of circumstance, were interpolated by the author from time to time.

63. Ariosto has been, after Homer, the favourite poet of Europe. His grace and facility, his clear

* The best authorities for the early history of the Reformation are Seckendorf, *Hist. Lutheranismi*, and Sleidan, *Hist. de la Réformation*, in Courayer's French translation; the former being chiefly useful for the ecclesiastical, the latter for political history. But as these confine themselves to Germany, Gerdes (*Hist. Evangel. Reformat.*) is necessary for the Zuinglian history, as well as for that of the northern kingdoms. The first sections of Father Paul's *History of the Council of Trent* are also valuable. Schmidt, *Histoire des Allemands*, vols. vi. and vii., has told the story on the side of Rome speciously and with some fairness; and Roscoe has vindicated Leo X. from the imputation of unnecessary violence in his proceeding against Luther. Mosheim is always good, but concise; Milner far from concise, but highly prejudiced, and in the habit of giving his quotations in English, which is not quite satisfactory to a lover of truth.

The essay on the influence of

the Reformation by Villers, which obtained a prize from the French Institute, and has been extolled by a very friendly, but better-informed writer in the *Biographie Universelle*, appears to me the work of a man who had not taken the pains to read any one contemporary work, or even any compilation which contains many extracts. No wonder that it does not represent, in the slightest degree, the real spirit of the times, or the tenets of the reformers. Thus, e. g., "Luther," he says, "exposed the abuse of the traffic of indulgences, and the danger of believing that heaven and the remission of all crimes could be bought with money; while a sincere repentance and an amended life were the only means of appeasing the divine justice." (p. 65. Engl. Transl.) This at least is not very like Luther's antinomian contempt for repentance and amendment of life; it might come near to the notions of Erasmus.

and rapid stream of language, his variety and beauty of invention, his very transitions of subject, so frequently censured by critics, but artfully devised to spare the tediousness that hangs on a protracted story, left him no rival in general popularity. Above sixty editions of the *Orlando Furioso* were published in the sixteenth century. There was not one, says Bernardo Tasso, of any age, or sex, or rank, who was satisfied after more than a single perusal. If the change of manners and sentiments have already in some degree impaired this attraction, if we cease to take interest in the prowess of Paladins, and find their combats a little monotonous, this is perhaps the necessary lot of all poetry, which, as it can only reach posterity through the medium of contemporary reputation, must accommodate itself to the fleeting character of its own time. This character is strongly impressed on the *Orlando Furioso*; it well suited an age of war, and pomp, and gallantry; an age when chivalry was still recent in actual life, and was reflected in concentrated brightness from the mirror of romance.

64. It has been sometimes hinted as an objection to Ariosto, that he is not sufficiently in earnest, and leaves a little suspicion of laughing at his subject. I do not perceive that he does this in a greater degree than good sense and taste permit. The poets of knight-errantry might in this respect be arranged in a scale, of which Pulci and Spenser would stand at the extreme points; the one mocking the absurdities he coolly invents, the other, by intense strength of conception, full of love and faith in his

Want of
seriousness.

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own creations. Between these Boiardo, Ariosto, and Berni take successively their places; none so deeply serious as Spenser, none so ironical as Pulci. It was not easy in Italy, especially after the *Morgante Maggiore* had roused the sense of ridicule, to keep up at every moment the solemn tone which Spain endured in the romances of the sixteenth century; nor was this consonant to the gaiety of Ariosto. It is the light carelessness of his manner which constitutes a great part of its charm.

A continu-
-ation of
Boiardo's.

65. Castelvetro has blamed Ariosto for building on the foundations of Boiardo.* He seems to have had originally no other design than to carry onward, a little better than Agostini, that very attractive story; having written, it is said, at first only a few cantos to please his friends.† Certainly it is rather singular that so great and renowned a poet should have been little more than the continuator of one who had so lately preceded him; though Salviati defends him by the example of Homer; and other critics, with whom we shall perhaps not agree, have thought this the best apology for writing a romantic instead of an heroic poem. The story of the *Orlando Innamorato* must be known before we can well understand that of the *Furioso*. But this is nearly what we find in

* *Poetica d'Aristotele* (1570). It violates, he says, the rule of Aristotle, *αρχη εστιν, ο εξ αναγκης μη μετ' αλλο εστι*. Camillo Pellegrini, in his famous controversy with the Academicians of Florence, repeats the same censure. Salviati,

under the disguised name *l'Infarinato* (*Opere di Tasso*, ii. 130.); defends Ariosto by the example of Homer, which Castelvetro had already observed to be inapplicable.

† Quadrio, *Storia d'ogni poesia*, vi. 606.

Homer ; for who can reckon the Iliad any thing but a fragment of the tale of Troy ? It was indeed less felt by the compatriots of Homer, already familiar with that legendary cyclus of heroic song, than it is by the readers of Ariosto, who are not in general very well acquainted with the poem of his precursor. Yet experience has even here shown that the popular voice does not echo the complaint of the critic. This is chiefly owing to the want of a predominant unity in the Orlando Furioso, which we commonly read in detached parcels. The unity it does possess, distinct from the story of Boiardo, consists in the loves and announced nuptials of Rogero and Bradamante, the imaginary progenitors of the house of Este ; but Ariosto does not gain by this condescension to the vanity of a petty sovereign.

66. The inventions of Ariosto are less original than those of Boiardo, but they are more pleasing and various. The tales of old mythology and of modern romance furnished him with those delightful episodes we all admire, with his Olimpia and Bireno, his Ariodante and Geneura, his Cloridan and Medoro, his Zerbino and Isabella. He is more conversant with the Latin poets, or has turned them to better account than his predecessor. For the sudden transitions in the middle of a canto or even a stanza, with which every reader of Ariosto is familiar, he is indebted to Boiardo, who had himself imitated in them the metrical romancers of the preceding age. From them also, that justice may be rendered to those nameless rhymers, Boiardo drew the individuality of character, by which their

In some
points in-
ferior.

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heroes were distinguished, and which Ariosto has not been so careful to preserve. His Orlando has less of the honest simplicity, and his Astolfo less of the gay boastfulness, than had been assigned to them in the cyclus.

Beauties of
its style.

67. Corniani observes of the style of Ariosto, what we may all perceive on attending to it to be true, that he is sparing in the use of metaphors, contenting himself generally with the plainest expression ; by which, if he loses something in dignity, he gains in perspicuity. It may be added, that he is not very successful in figurative language, which is sometimes forced and exaggerated. Doubtless this transparency of phrase, so eminent in Ariosto, is the cause that he is read and delighted in by the multitude, as well as by the few ; and it seems also to be the cause that he can never be satisfactorily rendered into any language less musical, and consequently less independent upon an ornamental dress in poetry, than his own, or one which wants the peculiar advantages, by which conventional variances in the form of words, and the liberty of inversion, as well as the frequent recurrence of the richest and most euphonious rhymes, elevate the simplest expression in Italian verse above the level of discourse. Galileo, being asked by what means he had acquired the remarkable talent of giving perspicuity and grace to his philosophical writings, referred it to the continual study of Ariosto. His similes are conspicuous for their elaborate beauty ; they are familiar to every reader of this great poet ; imitated, as they usually are, from the ancients, they maintain an equal strife with their models.

and occasionally surpass them. But even the general strain of Ariosto, natural as it seems, was not unpremeditated, or left to its own felicity; his manuscript at Ferrara, part of which is shown to strangers, bears numerous alterations, the *pentimenti*, if I may borrow a word from a kindred art, of creative genius.

68. The Italian critics love to expatiate in his praise, though they are often keenly sensible to his defects. The variety of style and of rhythm in Ariosto, it is remarked by Gravina, is convenient to that of his subject. His rhymes, the same author observes, seem to spring from the thoughts, and not from the necessities of metre. He describes minutely, but with much felicity, and gives a clear idea of every part; like the Farnesian Hercules, which seems greater by the distinctness of every vein and muscle.* Quadrio praises the correspondence of the sound to the sense. Yet neither of these critics is blindly partial. It is acknowledged indeed by his warmest advocates, that he falls sometimes below his subject, and that trifling and feeble lines intrude too frequently in the Orlando Furioso. I can hardly regret, however, that in the passages of flattery towards the house of Este, such as that long genealogy which he deduces in the third canto, his genius has deserted him, and he degenerates, as it were wilfully, into prosaic tediousness. In other allusions to contemporary history, he is little better. I am hazarding a deviation from the judgment of good critics

Accom-
panied with
faults.

* Ragon Poetica, p. 104.

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when I add, that in the opening stanzas of each canto, where the poet appears in his own person, I find generally a deficiency of vigour and originality, a poverty of thought and of emotion, which is also very far from unusual in the speeches of his characters. But these introductions have been greatly admired.

Its place as
a poem.

69. Many faults of language in Ariosto are observed by his countrymen. They justly blame also his inobservance of propriety, his hyperbolical extravagance, his harsh metaphors, his affected thoughts. These are sufficiently obvious to a reader of reflecting taste; but the enchantment of his pencil redeems every failing, and his rapidity, like that of Homer, leaves us little time to censure before we are hurried forward to admire. The Orlando Furioso, as a great single poem, has been very rarely surpassed in the living records of poetry. He must yield to three, and only three, of his predecessors. He has not the force, simplicity, and truth to nature of Homer, the exquisite style and sustained majesty of Virgil, nor the originality and boldness of Dante. The most obvious parallel is Ovid, whose Metamorphoses, however, are far excelled by the Orlando Furioso, not in fertility of invention, or variety of images and sentiments, but in purity of taste, in grace of language, and harmony of versification.

Amadis de
Gaul.

70. No edition of Amadis de Gaul has been proved to exist before that printed at Seville in 1519, which yet is suspected of not being the first.*

* Brunet, Man. du libraire.

This famous romance, which in its day was almost as popular as the Orlando Furioso itself, was translated into French by Herberay between 1540 and 1557, and into English by Munday in 1619. The four books by Vasco de Lobeyra grew to twenty by successive additions, which have been held by lovers of romance far inferior to the original. They deserve at least the blame, or praise, of making the entire work unreadable by the most patient or the most idle of mankind. Amadis de Gaul can still perhaps impart pleasure to the susceptible imagination of youth; but the want of deep or permanent sympathy leaves a naked sense of unprofitableness in the perusal, which must, it should seem, alienate a reader of mature years. Amadis at least obtained the laurel at the hands of Cervantes, speaking through the barber and curate, while so many of Lobeyra's unworthy imitators were condemned to the flames.

71. A curious dramatic performance, if it may Gringore deserve such an appellation, was represented at Paris in 1511, and published in 1516. It is entitled *Le Prince des Sots et la Mère sotte*, by one Peter Gringore, who had before produced some other pieces of less note, and bordering more closely on the moralities. In the general idea there was nothing original. A prince of fools had long ruled his many-coloured subjects on the theatre of a joyous company, *les Enfants sans souci*, who had diverted the citizens of Paris with their buffoonery, under the name, perhaps, of moralities, while their graver brethren represented the mysteries of scripture and legend. But the chief aim

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of *La Mère sottie* was to turn the pope and court of Rome into ridicule during the sharp contest of Louis XII. with Julius II. It consists of four parts, all in verse. The first of these is called *The Cry*, and serves as a sort of prologue, summoning all fools of both sexes to see the prince of fools play on Shrove Tuesday. The second is *The Folly*. This is an irregular dramatic piece, full of poignant satire on the clergy, but especially on the pope. A third part is entitled *The Morality of the Obstinate Man*; a dialogue in allusion to the same dispute. Finally comes an indecent farce, unconnected with the preceding subject. Gringore, who represented the character of *La Mère sottie*, was generally known by that name, and assumed it in his subsequent publications.*

Hans
Sachs.

72. Gringore was certainly at a great distance from the Italian stage, which had successfully adapted the plots of Latin comedies to modern stories. But, among the *barbarians*, a dramatic writer, somewhat younger than he, was now beginning to earn a respectable celebrity, though limited to a yet uncultivated language, and to the inferior class of society. Hans Sachs, a shoemaker of Nuremberg, born in 1494, is said to have produced his first carnival play (*Fast nacht spiel*) in 1517. He belonged to the fraternity of poetical artizans, the *meister-singers* of Germany,

* Beauchamps, *Recherches sur le Théâtre Français*. Goujet, *Bibl. Française*, xi. 212. Nicéron, vol. xxxiv. Bouterwek, *Gesch. der Französ. Poesie*, v. 113. Biogr. Univers. The works of Gringore,

says the last authority, are rare, and sought by the lovers of our old poetry, because they display the state of manners at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

who, from the beginning of the fourteenth century, had a succession of mechanical (in every sense of the word) rhymers to boast, to whom their countrymen attached as much reverence as might have sufficed for more genuine bards. In a spirit which might naturally be expected from artizans, they required a punctual observance of certain arbitrary canons, the by-laws of the corporation Muses, to which the poet must conform. These, however, did not diminish the fecundity, if they repressed the excursiveness, of our meister-singers, and least of all that of Hans Sachs himself, who poured forth, in about forty years, fifty-three sacred and seventy-eight profane plays, sixty-four farces, fifty-nine fables, and a large assortment of other poetry. These dramatic works are now scarce, even in Germany; they appear to be ranged in the same class as the early fruits of the French and English theatres. We shall mention Hans Sachs again in another chapter.*

73. No English poet, since the death of Lydgate, had arisen whom it could be thought worth while to mention.† Many, perhaps, will not admit that Stephen Hawes, who now meets us, should be reckoned in that honourable list. His “Pastime of Pleasure, or the Historie of Graunde Amour and La bel Pucel,” finished in 1506, was printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1517. From

Stephen
Hawes.

* Biogr. Univ. Eichhorn, iii. 948. Bouterwek, ix. 381. Heinsius, iv. 150. Retrospective Review, vol. x.

† I have adverted in another place to Alexander Barclay's

translation of the Ship of Fools from Sebastian Brandt; and I may here observe, that he has added many original strokes on his own countrymen, especially on the clergy.

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this title we might hardly expect a moral and learned allegory, in which the seven sciences of the trivium and quadrivium, besides a host of abstract virtues and qualities, play their parts, in living personality, through a poem of about six thousand lines. Those who require the ardent words or the harmonious grace of poetical diction, will not frequently be content with Hawes. Unlike many of our older versifiers, he would be judged more unfavourably by extracts than by a general view of his long work. He is rude, obscure, full of pedantic latinisms, and probably has been disfigured in the press; but learned and philosophical, reminding us frequently of the school of James I. The best, though probably an unexpected, parallel for Hawes is John Bunyan; their inventions are of the same class, various and novel, though with no remarkable pertinence to the leading subject, or naturally consecutive order; their characters, though abstract in name, have a personal truth about them, in which Phineas Fletcher, a century after Hawes, fell much below him; they render the general allegory subservient to inculcating a system, the one of philosophy, the other of religion. I do not mean that the Pastime of Pleasure is equal in merit, as it certainly has not been in success, to the Pilgrim's Progress. Bunyan is powerful and picturesque from his concise simplicity; Hawes has the common failings of our old writers, a tedious and languid diffuseness, an expatiating on themes of pedantry in which the reader takes no interest, a weakening of every feature and every reflection by ignorance of the

touches that give effect. But if we consider the "Historie of Graunde Amour" less as a poem to be read than as a measure of the author's mental power, we shall not look down upon so long and well-sustained an allegory. In this style of poetry much was required, that no mind ill stored with reflection, or incapable of novel combination, could supply; a clear conception of abstract modes, a familiarity with the human mind, and with the effects of its qualities on human life, a power of justly perceiving and vividly representing the analogies of sensible and rational objects. Few that preceded Hawes have possessed more of these gifts than himself.

74. This poem has been little known till Mr. Southey reprinted it in 1831; the original edition is very rare. Warton had given several extracts, which, as I have observed, are disadvantageous to Hawes, and an analysis of the whole*; but though he praises the author for imagination, and admits that the poem has been unjustly neglected, he has not dwelt enough on the erudition and reflection it displays. Hawes appears to have been educated at Oxford, and to have travelled much on the Continent. He held also an office in the court of Henry VII. We may reckon him therefore among the earliest of our learned and accomplished gentlemen; and his poem is the first fruits of that gradual ripening of the English mind, which must have been the process of the laboratory of time, in the silence and darkness of the fifteenth century.

* Hist. of Engl. Poetry, iii. 54.

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Change in
English
language.

It augured a generation of grave and stern thinkers, and the omen was not vain.

75. Another poem, the *Temple of Glass*, which Warton had given to Hawes, is now by general consent restored to Lydgate. Independently of external proof, which is decisive*, it will appear that the *Temple of Glass* is not written in the English of Henry VII.'s reign. I mention this only for the sake of observing, that in following the line of our writers in verse and prose, we find the old obsolete English to have gone out of use about the accession of Edward IV. Lydgate and bishop Pecock, especially the latter, are not easily understood by a reader not habituated to their language; he requires a glossary, or must help himself out by conjecture. In the *Paston Letters*, on the contrary, in *Harding*, the metrical chronicler, or in *Sir John Fortescue's* discourse on the difference between an absolute and limited monarchy, he finds scarce any difficulty; antiquated words and forms of termination frequently occur; but he is hardly sensible that he reads these books much less fluently than those of modern times. These were written about 1470. But in *Sir Thomas More's History of Edward V.*, written about 1509, or in the beautiful ballad of the *Nut-brown Maid*, which we cannot place very far from the year 1500, but which, if nothing can be brought to contradict the internal evidence, I should incline to refer to this *decennium*, there is not only a diminution of obsolete

* See note in Price's edition of Warton, *ubi supra*: to which I add, that the *Temple of Glass* is mentioned in the *Paston Letters*, ii. 90., long before the time of Hawes.

phraseology, but a certain modern turn and structure, both in the verse and prose, which denotes the commencement of a new æra, and the establishment of new rules of taste in polite literature. Every one will understand, that a broad line cannot be traced for the beginning of this change: Hawes, though his English is very different from that of Lydgate, seems to have had a great veneration for him, and has imitated the manner of that school, to which, in a marshalling of our poets, he unquestionably belongs. Skelton, on the contrary, though ready enough to coin words, has comparatively few that are obsolete.

76. The strange writer, whom we have just mentioned, seems to fall well enough within this decad; though his poetical life was long, if it be true that he received the laureate crown at Oxford in 1483, and was also the author of a libel on Sir Thomas More, ascribed to him by Ellis, which, alluding to the Nun of Kent, could hardly be written before 1533.* But though this piece is somewhat in Skelton's manner, we find it said that he died in 1529, and it is probably the work of an imitator. Skelton is certainly not a poet, unless some degree of comic humour, and a torrent-like volubility of words in doggrel rhyme, can make one; but this uncommon fertility, in a language so little copious as ours was at that time, bespeaks a mind of some original vigour. Few English writers come nearer in this respect to Rabelais, whom Skelton preceded. His attempts in serious poetry are utterly contemptible; but the

Skelton.

* Ellis's *Specimens*, vol. ii.

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satirical lines on Cardinal Wolsey were probably not ineffective. It is impossible to determine whether they were written before 1520. Though these are better known than any poem of Skelton's, his dirge on Philip Sparrow is the most comic and imaginative.*

Oriental
languages.

77. We must now take a short survey of some other departments of literature during this second decad of the sixteenth century. The oriental languages become a little more visible in bibliography than before. An Æthiopic, that is, Abyssinian grammar, with the Psalms in the same language, was published at Rome by Potken in 1513; a short treatise in Arabic at Fano in 1514, being the first time those characters had been used in type; a psalter in 1516, by Giustiniani at Genoa, in Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, and Greek†; and a Hebrew Bible, with the Chaldee paraphrase and other aids, by Felice di Prato, at Venice in 1519. The book of Job in Hebrew appeared at Paris in 1516. Meantime the magnificent polyglott Bible of Alcala proceeded under the patronage of Cardinal Ximenes, and was published in five volumes folio, between the years 1514 and 1517. It contains in triple columns the Hebrew, the Septua-

* This last poem is reprinted in Southey's *Selections from the older Poets*. Extracts from Skelton occur also in Warton, and one in the first volume of the *Somers Tracts*. Mr. Dyce has it, I believe, in contemplation to publish a collective edition.

† It is printed in eight columns, which Gesner, apud Bayle, Justiniani, Note D., thus describes: *Quarum prima habet Hebræam editionem,*

secunda Latinam interpretationem respondentem Hebrææ de verbo in verbum, tertia Latinam communem, quarta Græcam, quinta Arabicam, sexta paraphrasim, sermone quidem Chaldæo, sed literis Hebraicis conscriptam; septima Latinam respondentem Chaldeæ, ultima vero, id est octava, continet scholia, hoc est, annotationes sparsas et intercisas.

gint Greek, and Latin Vulgate; the Chaldee paraphrase of the Pentateuch by Onkelos being also printed at the foot of the page.* Spain, therefore, had found men equal to superintend this arduous labour. Lebrixa was still living, though much advanced in years; Stunica and a few other now obscure names were his coadjutors. But that of Demetrius Cretensis appears among these in the title-page, to whom the principal care of the Greek was doubtless intrusted; and it is highly probable, that all the early Hebrew and Chaldee publications demanded the assistance of Jewish rabbis.

78. The school of Padua, renowned already for its medical science as well as for the cultivation of the Aristotelian philosophy, laboured under a suspicion of infidelity, which was considerably heightened by the work of Pomponatius, its most renowned professor, on the immortality of the soul, published in 1516. This book met with several answerers, and was publicly burned at Venice; but the patronage of Bembo sustained Pomponatius at the court of Leo; and he was permitted by the inquisition to reprint his treatise with some corrections. He defended himself by declaring that he merely denied the validity of philosophical arguments for the soul's immortality, without doubting in the least the authority of revelation, to

Pompo-
natius.

* Andr  s, xix. 35. An observation in the preface to the Complutensian edition has been often animadverted upon, that they print the Vulgate between the Hebrew and the Greek, like Christ between two thieves. The expression, however it may have been introduced, is not to be wholly defended; but at that time it was generally believed, that the Hebrew text had been corrupted by the Jews.

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which, and to that of the church, he had expressly submitted. This, however, is the current language of philosophy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which must be judged by other presumptions. Brucker and Ginguéné are clear as to the real disbelief of Pomponatius in the doctrine, and bring some proofs from his other writings, which seem more unequivocal than any that the treatise *De Immortalitate* affords. It is certainly possible, and not uncommon, for men to deem the arguments on that subject inconclusive, so far as derived from reason, while they assent to those that rest on revelation. It is on the other hand impossible for a man to believe inconsistent propositions, when he perceives them to be so. The question therefore can only be, as Buhle seems to have seen, whether Pomponatius maintained the rational arguments for a future state to be repugnant to known truths, or merely insufficient for conviction; and this a superficial perusal of his treatise hardly enables me to determine; though there is a presumption, on the whole, that he had no more religion than the philosophers of Padua generally kept for a cloak. That university was for more than a century the focus of atheism in Italy.*

* Tiraboschi, vol. viii. Corniani. Ginguéné. Brucker. Buhle. Nicéron. Biogr. Universelle. The two last of these are more favourable than the rest to the intentions of the Paduan philosopher.

Pomponatius, or Peretto, as he was sometimes called, on account of his diminutive stature, which he had in common with his

predecessor in philosophy, Marsilius Ficinus, was ignorant of Greek, though he read lectures on Aristotle. In one of Sperone's dialogues (p. 120. edit. 1596) he is made to argue, that if all books were read in translations, the time now consumed in learning languages might be better employed.

79. We may enumerate among the philosophical writings of this period, as being first published in 1516, a treatise full two hundred years older, by Raymond Lully, a native of Majorca; one of those innovators in philosophy, who, by much boasting of their original discoveries in the secrets of truth, are taken by many at their word, and gain credit for systems of science, which those who believe in them seldom trouble themselves to examine, or even understand. Lully's principal treatise is his *Ars Magna*, being, as it professes, a new method of reasoning on all subjects. But this method appears to be only an artificial disposition, readily obvious to the eye, of subjects and predicables, according to certain distinctions; which, if it were meant for any thing more than a topical arrangement, such as the ancient orators employed to aid their invention, could only be compared to the similar scheme of using machinery instead of mental labour, devised by the philosophers of Laputa. Leibnitz is of opinion that the method might be convenient in extemporary speaking; which is the utmost limit that can be assigned to its usefulness. Lord Bacon has truly said of this, and of such idle or fraudulent attempts to substitute trick for science, that they are "not a lawful method, but a method of imposture, which is to deliver knowledges in such manner, as men may speedily come to make a show of learning, who have it not;" and that they are "nothing but a mass of words of all arts, to give men countenance, that those which use the terms might be thought to understand them."

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Raymond
Lully.

His me-
thod.

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80. The writings of Lully are admitted to be very obscure; and those of his commentators and admirers, among whom the meteors of philosophy, Cornelius Agrippa and Jordano Bruno, were enrolled, are hardly less so. But, as is usual with such empiric medicines, it obtained a great deal of celebrity, and much ungrounded praise, not only for the two centuries which intervened between the author's age and that of its appearance from the press, but for a considerable time afterwards, till the Cartesian philosophy drove that to which the art of Lully was accommodated from the field; and even Morhof, near the end of the seventeenth century, avows that, though he had been led to reckon it a frivolous method, he had very much changed his opinion on fuller examination.* The few pages which Brucker has given to Lully do not render his art very intelligible†; but they seem sufficient to show its uselessness for the discovery of truth. It is utterly impossible, even for those who have taken much pains to comprehend this method, which is not the case with me, to give a precise notion of it in a few words, even

* Morhof, Polyhistor, l. ii. c. 5. But if I understand the ground on which Morhof rests his favourable opinion of Lully's art, it is merely for its usefulness in suggesting middle terms to a syllogistic disputant.

† Brucker, iv. 9—21. Ginguéné, who observes that Brucker's analysis, à sa manière accoutumée, may be understood by those who have learned Lully's method, but must be very confused to others, has made the matter a great deal more unintelligible by his own at-

tempt to explain it. Hist. Litt. de l'Italie, vii. 497. I have found a better development of the method in Alstedius, Clavis Artis Lullianæ (Argentor. 1633), a staunch admirer of Lully. But his praise of the art, when examined, is merely as an aid to the memory, and to disputation, de quavis quæstione utramque in partem disputandi. This is rather an evil than a good; and though mnemonical contrivances are not without utility, it is probable that much better could be found than that of Lully.

with the help of diagrams, which are indispensably required.*

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81. The only geographical publication which occurs in this period is, an account of the recent discoveries in America, by Peter Martyr of Angheria, a Milanese, who passed great part of his life in the court of Madrid. The title is, *De Rebus Oceanicis decades tres*; but it is, in fact, a series of epistles, thirty in number, written, or feigned to be written, at different times as fresh information was received; the first bearing date a few days only after the departure of Columbus in 1493; while the two last decades are addressed to Leo X. An edition is said to have appeared in 1516, which is certainly the date of the author's dedication to Charles V.; yet this edition seems not to have been seen by bibliographers. Though Peter Martyr's own account has been implicitly believed by Robertson and many others, there seems strong internal presumption, or rather irresistible demonstration, against the authenticity of these epistles in the character they assume. It appears to me evident that he threw the intel-

Peter
Martyr's
epistles.

* Buhle has observed that the favourable reception of Lully's method is not surprising, since it really is useful in the association of ideas, like all other topical contrivances, and may be applied to any subject, though often not very appropriately, suggesting materials in extemporary speaking, and notwithstanding its shortness, professing to be a complete system of topics; but whoever should try it must be convinced of its inefficacy in reasoning. Hence he thinks

that such men as Agrippa and Bruno kept only the general principle of Lully's scheme, enlarging it by new contrivances of their own. *Hist. de Philos.* ii. 612. See also an article on Lully in the *Biographie Universelle*. Tenne-
mann calls the *Ars Magna* a logical machine to let men reason about every thing without study or reflection. *Manuel de la Philos.* i. 380. But this seems to have been much what Lully reckoned its merit.

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ligence obtained into that form many years after the time. Whoever will take the trouble of comparing the two first letters in the decades of Peter Martyr with any authentic history, will perceive that they are a negligent and palpable imposture, every date being falsified, even that of the year in which Columbus made his great discovery. It is a strange instance of oversight in Robertson that he has uniformly quoted them as written at the time, for the least attention must have shown him the contrary. And it may here be mentioned, that a similar suspicion has been very reasonably entertained with respect to another collection of epistles by the same author, rather better known than the present. There is a folio volume with which those who have much attended to the history of the sixteenth century are well acquainted, purporting to be a series of letters from Anghiera to various friends between the years 1488 and 1522. They are full of interesting facts, and would be still more valuable than they are, could we put our trust in their genuineness as strictly contemporary documents. But, though Robertson has almost wholly relied upon them in his account of the Castilian insurrection, and even in the *Biographie Universelle* no doubt is raised as to their being truly written at their several dates, yet La Monnoye (if I remember right, certainly some one) long since charged the author with imposture, on the ground that the letters, into which he wove the history of his times, are so full of anachronisms as to render it evident that they were fabricated afterwards. It is several years since I read these

epistles; but I was certainly struck with some palpable errors in chronology, which led me to suspect that several of them were wrongly dated, the solution of their being feigned not occurring to my mind, as the book is of considerable reputation.* A ground of suspicion hardly less striking is, that the letters of Peter Martyr are too exact for verisimilitude; he announces events with just the importance they ought to have, predicts nothing but what comes to pass, and must in fact be either an impostor (in an innocent sense of the word), or one of the most sagacious men of his time. But, if not exactly what they profess to be, both these works of Anghiera are valuable as contemporary history; and the first mentioned in particular, *De Rebus Oceanicis*, is the earliest account we possess of the settlement of the Spaniards in Darien, and of the whole period between Columbus and Cortes.

82. It would be embarrassing to the reader were we to pursue any longer that rigidly chronological division by short decennial periods, which has hitherto served to display the regular progress of

* The following are specimens of anachronism, which seem fatal to the genuineness of these epistles, and are only selected from others. In the year 1489 he writes to a friend: *In peculiarem te nostræ tempestatis morbum, qui appellatione Hispanâ Bubarum dicitur, ab Italis morbus Gallicus, medicorum Elephantiam alii, alii aliter appellant, incidisse præcipientem, libero ad me scribis pede.* Epist. 68. Now if we should even believe that this disease was known some years before the discovery of

America and the siege of Naples, is it probable that it could have obtained the name of morbus Gallicus before the latter æra? In February 1511, he communicates the absolution of the Venetians by Julius II., which took place in February 1510. Epist. 451. In a letter dated at Brussels, 31 Aug. 1520. (Epist. 689.), he mentions the burning of the canon law at Wittenberg by Luther, which is well known to have happened in the ensuing November.

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European literature, and especially of classical learning. Many other provinces were now cultivated, and the history of each is to be traced separately from the rest, though frequently with mutual reference, and with regard, as far as possible, to their common unity. In the period immediately before us, that unity was chiefly preserved by the diligent study of the Latin and Greek languages; it was to the writers in those languages that the theologian, the civil lawyer, the physician, the geometer and philosopher, even the poet, for the most part, and dramatist, repaired for the materials of their knowledge, and the nourishment of their minds. We shall begin, therefore, by following the further advances of philological literature; and some readers must here, as in other places, pardon what they will think unnecessary minuteness in so general a work as the present, for the sake of others who set a value on precise information.

CHAP. V.

HISTORY OF ANCIENT LITERATURE IN EUROPE
FROM 1520 TO 1550.

Classical Taste of the Italians — Ciceronians — Erasmus attacks them — Writings on Roman Antiquity — Learning in France — Commentaries of Budæus — Progress of Learning in Spain, Germany, England — State of Cambridge and Oxford — Advance of Learning still slow — Encyclopædic Works.

1. ITALY, the genial soil where the literature of antiquity had been first cultivated, still retained her superiority in the fine perception of its beauties, and in the power of retracing them by spirited imitation. It was the land of taste and sensibility ; never surely more so than in the age of Raffaele as well as Ariosto. Far from the clownish ignorance so long predominant in the transalpine aristocracy, the nobles of Italy, accustomed to a city life, and to social festivity, more than to war or the chase, were always conspicuous for their patronage, and, what is more important than mere patronage, their critical skill in matters of art and elegant learning. Among the ecclesiastical order this was naturally still more frequent. If the successors of Leo X. did not attain so splendid a name, they were perhaps, after the short reign of Adrian VI., which, if we may believe the Italian writers, seemed to threaten an absolute return of

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 Superiority
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in taste.

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barbarism *, not less munificent or sedulous in encouraging polite and useful letters. The first part indeed of this period of thirty years was very adverse to the progress of learning; especially in that disastrous hour when the lawless mercenaries of Bourbon's army were led on to the sack of Rome. In this, and in other calamities of the same kind, it happened that universities and literary academies were broken up, that libraries were destroyed or dispersed. That of Sadolet, having been with difficulty saved in the pillage of Rome, was dispersed, in consequence of shipwreck during its transport to France.† A better æra commenced

* Valerianus, in his treatise *De Infelicitate Litteratorum*, a melancholy series of unfortunate authors, in the manner, though not quite with the spirit and interest, of Mr. d'Israeli, speaks of Adrian VI. as of another Paul II. in hatred of literature. *Ecce adest musarum et eloquentiæ, tetiusque nitoris hostis acerrimus, qui literatis omnibus inimicitias minitatur, quoniam, ut ipse dicitabat, Terentiani essent, quos cum odisse atque etiam persequi cœpisset, voluntarium alii exilium, alias atque alias alii latebras quærentes, tamdiu latuere, quoad Dei beneficio, altero imperii anno decessit, qui si aliquanto diutius vixisset, Gotica illa tempora adversus bonas literas videbatur suscitaturus.* Lib. ii. p. 34. It is but fair to add, that Erasmus ascribes to Adrian the protection of letters in the Low Countries. *Vix nostra phalanx sustinisset hostium conjurationem, ni Adrianus tum Cardinalis, postea Romanus pontifex, hoc edidisset oraculum: Bonas literas non damno, hæreses et schismata damno.* Epist. mclxxvi. There is not indeed much in this: but the Biographie

Universelle (Suppl. art. Busleiden) informs us that this pope was compelled to interfere in order to remove the impediments to the foundation of Busleiden's Collegium Trilingue at Louvain. It is well known that Adrian VI. was inclined to reform some abuses in the church, enough to set the Italians against him. See his life, in Bayle, Note D.

† Cum enim direptis rebus cæteris, libri soli superstites ab hostium injuria intacti, in navim conjuncti, ad Galliæ littus jam pervecti essent, incidit in vectores, et in ipsos familiares meos pestilentia. Quo metu ii permoti, quorum ad littora navis appulsa fuerat, onera in terram exponi non permisere. Ita asportati sunt in alienas et ignotas terras; exceptisque voluminibus paucis, quæ deportavi mecum huc proficiscens, mei reliqui illi tot labores quos impenderamus, Græcis præsertim codicibus conquirendis undique et colligendis, mei tanti sumptus, meæ curæ, omnes iterum jam ad nihilum reciderunt. Sadolet. Epist. lib. i. p. 23. (Colon. 1554.)

with the pacification of Italy in 1531. The subsequent wars were either transient, or partial in their effects. The very extinction of all hope for civil freedom, which characterised the new period, turned the intellectual energies of an acute and ardent people towards those tranquil pursuits, which their rulers would both permit and encourage.

2. The real excellence of the ancients in literature as well as art gave rise to an enthusiastic and exclusive admiration of antiquity, not unusual indeed in other parts of Europe, but in Italy a sort of national pride which all partook. They went back to the memory of past ages for consolation in their declining fortunes, and conquered their barbarian masters of the north in imagination with Cæsar and Marius. Every thing that reminded them of the slow decay of Rome, sometimes even their religion itself, sounded ill in their fastidious ears. Nothing was so much at heart with the Italian scholars, as to write a Latin style, not only free from barbarism, but conformable to the standard of what is sometimes called the Augustan age, that is, of the period from Cicero to Augustus. Several of them affected to be exclusively Ciceronian.

Admiration
of anti-
quity-

3. Sadolet, one of the apostolic secretaries under Leo X. and Clement VII., and raised afterwards to the purple by Paul III., stood in as high a rank as any for purity of language without affectation, though he seems to have been reckoned of the Ciceronian school. Except his epistles, however, none of Sadolet's works are now read, or even appear to have been very conspicuous in his own

Sadolet.

age; though Corniani has given an analysis of a treatise on education.* A greater name, in point of general literary reputation, was Peter Bembo, a noble Venetian, secretary with Sadolet to Leo, and raised, like him, to the dignity of a cardinal by Paul III. Bembo was known in Latin and in Italian literature; and in each language both as a prose writer and a poet. We shall thus have to regard four claims he prefers to a niche in the temple of fame, and we shall find none of them ungrounded. In pure Latin style he was not perhaps superior to Sadolet, but would not have yielded to any competitor in Europe. It has been told, in proof of Bembo's scrupulous care to give his compositions the utmost finish, that he kept forty portfolios, into which every sheet entered successively, and was only taken out to undergo his corrections, before it entered into the next limbo of this purgatory. Though this may

* Nicéron says of Sadolet's Epistles, which form a very thick volume: *Il y a plusieurs choses dignes d'être remarquées dans les lettres de Sadolet; mais elles sont quelquefois trop diffuses, et par conséquent ennuyeuses à lire.* I concur in this: yet it may be added, that the Epistles of Cicero would sometimes be tedious, if we took as little interest in their subjects as we commonly do in those of Sadolet. His style is uniformly pure and good; but he is less fastidious than Bembo, and does not use circuitry to avoid a theological expression. They are much more interesting, at least, than the ordinary Latin letters of his contemporaries, such as those of Paullus Manutius. A uniform goodness of heart and love of right prevail

in the epistles of Sadolet. His desire of ecclesiastical reformation in respect of morals has caused him to be suspected of a bias towards protestantism; and a letter he wrote to Melancthon, which that learned man did not answer, has been brought in corroboration of this; but the general tenor of his letters refutes this surmise; his theology, which was wholly semi-pelagian, must have led him to look with disgust on the Lutheran school (Epist. l.iii. p. 121., and l. ix. p. 410.); and after Paul III. bestowed on him the purple, he became a staunch friend of the court of Rome, though never losing his wish to see a reform of its abuses. This will be admitted by every one who takes the trouble to run over Sadolet's epistles.

not be quite true, it is but an exaggeration of the laborious diligence by which he must often have reduced his sense to feebleness and vacuity. He was one of those exclusive Ciceronians who, keenly feeling the beauties of their master's eloquence, and aware of the corruption which after the age of Augustus came rapidly over the purity of style, rejected with scrupulous care not only every word or phrase which could not be justified by the practice of what was called the golden age, but even insisted on that of Cicero himself, as the only model they thought absolutely perfect. Paullus Manutius, one of the most rigorous, though of the most eminent among these, would not employ the words of Cicero's correspondents, though as highly accomplished and polite as himself. This fastidiousness was of course highly inconvenient in a language constantly applicable to the daily occurrences of life in epistles or in narration, and it has driven Bembo, according to one of his severest critics, into strange affectation and circuitry in his Venetian history. It produced also, what was very offensive to the more serious reader, and is otherwise frigid and tasteless, an adaptation of heathen phrases to the usages and even the characters of Christianity.* It has been remarked also, that in

* This affectation had begun in the preceding century, and was carried by Campano in his *Life of Braccio di Montone* to as great an extreme as by Bembo, or any Ciceronian of his age. Bayle (*Bembus*, Note B.) gives some odd instances of it in the latter. Notwithstanding his laborious scrupulosity as to language, Bembo is reproached by Lipsius, and others

of a more advanced stage of critical knowledge, with many faults of Latin, especially in his letters. *Ibid.* Sturm says of the letters of Bembo: *Ejus epistolæ scriptæ mihi magis quam missæ esse videntur. Indicia sunt hominis otiosi et imitatoris speciem magis rerum quam res ipsas consectantis.* Ascham, *Epist.* cccxci.

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V.

his great solicitude about the choice of words, he was indifferent enough to the value of his meaning; a very common failing of elegant scholars, when they write in a foreign language. But if some praise is due, as surely it is, to the art of reviving that consummate grace and richness which enchants every successive generation in the periods of Cicero, we must place Bembo, had we nothing more than this to say of him, among the ornaments of literature in the sixteenth century.

Cicero-
nianus of
Erasmus.

4. The tone which Bembo and others of that school were studiously giving to ancient literature, provoked one of the most celebrated works of Erasmus, the dialogues entitled *Ciceronianus*. The primary aim of these was to ridicule the fastidious purity of that sort of writers, who would not use a case or tense for which they could not find authority in the works of Cicero. A whole winter's night, they thought, was well spent in composing a single sentence; but even then it was to be revised over and over again. Hence they wrote little except elaborated epistles. One of their rules, he tells us, was never to speak Latin, if they could help it, which must have seemed extraordinary in an age when it was the common language of scholars from different countries. It is certain, indeed, that the practice cannot be favourable to very pure Latinity.

5. Few books of that age give us more insight into its literary history and the public taste than the *Ciceronianus*. In a short retrospect Erasmus characterises all the considerable writers in Latin since the revival of letters, and endeavours to show

how far they wanted this Ciceronian elegance for which some were contending. He distinguishes in a spirit of sound taste between a just imitation which leaves free scope for genius, and a servile following of a single writer. "Let your first and chief care," he says, "be to understand thoroughly what you undertake to write about. That will give you copiousness of words, and supply you with true and natural sentiments. Then will it be found how your language lives and breathes, how it excites and hurries away the reader, and how it is a just image of your own mind. Nor will that be less genuine which you add to your own by imitation."

6. The Ciceronianus, however, goes in some passages beyond the limited subject of Latin style. The controversy had some reference to the division between the men of learning and the men of taste, between the lovers of the solid and of the brilliant, in some measure also, to that between Christianity and Paganism, a garb which the incredulity of the Italians affected to put on. All the Ciceronian party, except Longolius, were on the other side of the Alps.* The object of the Italian scholars was to write pure Latin, to gleam little morsels of Roman

* Though this is generally said, on the authority of Erasmus himself, Peter Bunel is asserted by some French scholars of great name, and particularly by Henry Stephens, to have equalled in Ciceronian purity the best of the Italians; and Paullus Manutius owns him as his master, in one of his epistles: Ego ab illo maximum habebam beneficium, quod me cum Politianis et Erasmi nescio quibus

miserè errantem, in hanc rectè scribendi viam primus induxerat. In a later edition, for Politianis et Erasmi, it was thought more decent to introduce Philelphus et Campanis. Bayle, art. Bunel, Note A. The letters of Bunel, written with great purity, were published in 1551. It is to be observed, that he had lived much in Italy. Erasmus does not mention him in the Ciceronianus.

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literature, to talk a heathenish philosophy in private, and leave the world to its own abuses. That of Erasmus was to make men wiser and better by wit, sense, and learning.

Scaliger's
invective
against it.

7. Julius Cæsar Scaliger wrote against the Ciceronianus with all that unmannerly invective, which is the disgrace of many scholars, and very much his own. His vanity blinded him to what was then obvious to Europe, that with considerable learning, and still better parts, he was totally unworthy of being named with the first man in the literary republic. Nor in fact had he much right to take up the cause of the Ciceronian purists, with whom he had no pretension to be reckoned, though his reply to Erasmus is not ill written. It consists chiefly in a vindication of Cicero's life and writings against some passages in the Ciceronianus which seem to affect them, scarcely touching the question of Latin style. Erasmus made no answer, and thus escaped the danger of retaliating on Scaliger in his own phrases.

Editions of
Cicero.

8. The devotedness of the Italians to Cicero was displayed in a more useful manner than by this close imitation. Pietro Vettori (better known as Victorius), professor of Greek and Roman literature at Florence, published an entire edition of the great orator's writings in 1534. But this was soon surpassed by a still more illustrious scholar, Paulus Manutius, son of Aldus, and his successor in the printing-house at Venice. His edition of Cicero appeared in 1540. It is by far the most important edition of any ancient author that had hitherto been published. In fact, the notes of Manutius,

which were very much augmented in later editions *, form at this day in great measure the basis of interpretation and illustration of Cicero, as what are called the Variorum editions will show. A further accession to Ciceronian literature was made by Nizolius in his *Observationes in M. Tullium Ciceronem*, 1535. This hardly indicates that it is a dictionary of Ciceronian words, with examples of their proper senses. The later and improved editions bear the title of *Thesaurus Ciceronianus*. I find no critical work in this period of greater extent and labour than that of Scaliger de *Causis Latinæ Linguæ*; by “causis” meaning its principles. It relates much to the foundations of the language, or the rules by which its various peculiarities have been formed. He corrects many alleged errors of earlier writers, and sometimes of Valla himself; enumerating, rather invidiously, 634 of such errors in an index. In this book he shows much acuteness and judgment.

9. The *Geniales Dies* of Alexander ab Alexandro, a Neapolitan lawyer, published in 1522, are on the model of Aulus Gellius, a repertory of miscellaneous learning, thrown together without arrangement, on every subject of Roman philology and antiquities. The author had lived with the scholars of the fifteenth century, and even remembered Philelphus; but his own reputation seems not to have been extensive, at least through Europe. “He knows every one,” says Erasmus in a

Alexander
ab Alex-
andro.

* Renouard, Imprimerie des Aldes.

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V.

letter ; “ no one knows who he is.”* The *Geniales Dies* has had better success in later ages than most early works of criticism, a good edition having appeared, with *Variorum* notes, in 1673. It gives, like the *Lectiones Antiquæ* of Cælius Rhodiginus, an idea of the vast extent to which the investigation of Latin antiquity had been already carried ; though so much was left for the *coryphæi* of these researches, whom the ensuing age was to produce.

Works on
Roman an-
tiquities.

10. A very few books of the same class belong to this period ; and may deserve mention, although long since superseded by the works of those to whom we have just alluded, and who filled up and corrected their outline. Marlianus on the Topography of Rome, 1534, is admitted, though with some hesitation, by Grævius into his *Thesaurus Antiquitatum Romanarum*, while he absolutely sets aside the preceding labours of Blondus Flavius and Pomponius Lætus. The *Fasti Consulares* were first published by Marlianus in 1549 ; and a work on the same subject in 1550 was the earliest production of the great Sigonius. Before these the memorable events of Roman history had not been critically reduced to a chronological series. A treatise by Raphael of Volterra *de Magistratibus et Sacerdotibus Romanorum* is very inaccurate and superficial.*

* Demiror quis sit ille Alexander ab Alexandro. Novit omnes celebres Italiæ viros, Philelphum, Pomponium Lætum, Hermolaum, et quos non ? Omnibus usus est familiariter ; tamen nemo novit illum. Append. ad Erasm. Epist. cccclxxiii. (1533.) Bayle also remarks, that Alexander is hardly mentioned

by his contemporaries. Tiraqueau, a French lawyer of considerable learning, undertook the task of writing critical notes on the *Geniales Dies* about the middle of the century, correcting many of the errors which they contained.

† It is published in Sallengre, *Novus Thesaurus Antiquit.*, vol. iii.

Mazochius, a Roman bookseller, was the first who, in 1521, published a collection of inscriptions. This was very imperfect, and full of false monuments. A better appeared in Germany by the care of Apianus, professor of mathematics at Ingoldstadt, in 1534.*

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11. It could not be expected, that the elder and more copious fountain of ancient lore, the Greek language, would slake the thirst of Italian scholars as readily as the Latin. No local association, no patriotic sentiment, could attach them to that study. Greece itself no longer sent out a Lascaris or a Musurus; subdued, degraded, barbarous in language and learning, alien, above all, by insuperable enmity, from the church, she had ceased to be a living guide to her own treasures. Hence we may observe even already, not a diminution, but a less accelerated increase of Greek erudition in Italy. Two however among the most considerable editions of Greek authors, in point of labour, that the century produced, are the Galen by Andrew of Asola in 1525, and the Eustathius from the press of Bladus at Rome in 1542.† We may add, as first editions of Greek authors, Epictetus, at Venice, in 1528, and Arrian in 1535; Ælian, at Rome, in 1545. The Etymologicum Magnum of Phavorinus, whose real name was Guarino, published at Rome in 1523, was of some importance, while no lexicon but the very defective one of Craston had been printed. The Etymologicum of Phavorinus, however, is merely “a compilation from Hesychius,

Greek less
studied in
Italy.

* Burmann, præfat. in Gruter, † Greswell's Early Parisian Greek
Corpus Inscriptionum. Press, p. 14.

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V.

Suidas, Phrynichus, Harpocraton, Eustathius, the Etymologica, the lexicon of Philemon, some treatises of Trypho, Apollonius, and other grammarians and various scholiasts. It is valuable as furnishing several important corrections of the authors from whom it was collected, and not a few extracts from unpublished grammarians.*

Schools of
classical
learning.

12. Of the Italian scholars, Vettori, already mentioned, seems to have earned the highest reputation for his skill in Greek. But there was no considerable town in Italy, besides the regular universities, where public instruction in the Greek as well as Latin tongue was not furnished, and in many cases by professors of fine taste and recondite learning, whose names were then eminent; such as Bonamico, Nizzoli, Parrhasio, Corrado, and Maffei, commonly called Raphael of Volterra. Yet, according to Tiraboschi, something was still wanting to secure these schools from the too frequent changes of teachers, which the hope of better salaries produced, and to give the students a more vigorous emulation, and a more uniform scheme of discipline.† This was to be supplied by the followers of Ignatius Loyola. But their interference with education in Italy did not begin in quite so early a period as the present.

Budeus;
his Com-
mentaries
on Greek.

13. If we cross the Alps, and look at the condition of learning in countries which we left in 1520 rapidly

* Quarterly Review, vol. xxii. Roscoe's Leo, ch. xi. Stephens is said to have inserted many parts of this lexicon of Guarino in his Thesaurus. Nicéron, xxii. 141.

† Vol. viii. 114. x. 319. Gin-

guéné, vii. 232., has copied Tiraboschi's account of these accomplished teachers with little addition, and probably with no knowledge of the original sources of information.

advancing on the footsteps of Italy, we shall find that, except in purity of Latin style, both France and Germany were now capable of entering the lists of fair competition. France possessed, by general confession, the most profound Greek scholar in Europe, Budæus. If this could before have been in doubt, he raised himself to a pinnacle of philological glory by his *Commentarii Linguae Græcæ*, Paris, 1529. The publications of the chief Greek authors by Aldus, which we have already specified, had given a compass of reading to the scholars of this period, which those of the fifteenth century could not have possessed. But, with the exception of the *Etymologicum* of Phavorinus, just mentioned, no attempt had been made by a native of western Europe to interpret the proper meaning of Greek words; even he had confined himself to compiling from the grammarians. In this large and celebrated treatise, Budæus has established the interpretation of a great part of the language. All later critics write in his praise. There will never be another Budæus in France, says Joseph Scaliger, the most envious and detracting, though the most learned, of the tribe.* But, referring to what Baillet and Blount have collected from older writers†, we will here insert the character of these Commentaries which an eminent living scholar has given.

14. "This great work of Budæus has been the text book and common storehouse of succeeding lexicographers. But a great objection to its general

Its character.

* Scaligerana, i. 33.

ii. 328. (Amst. 1725.) Blount,

† Baillet, *Jugemens des Savans*, in Budæo.

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V.

use was its want of arrangement. His observations on the Greek language are thrown together in the manner of a common-place book, an inconvenience which is imperfectly remedied by an alphabetical index at the end. His authorities and illustrations are chiefly drawn from the prose writers of Greece, the historians, orators, and fathers. With the poets he seems to have had a less intimate acquaintance. His interpretations are mostly correct, and always elegantly expressed; displaying an union of Greek and Latin literature which renders his Commentaries equally useful to the students of both languages. The peculiar value of this work consists in the full and exact account which it gives of the Greek legal and forensic terms, both by literal interpretation, and by a comparison with the corresponding terms in Roman jurisprudence. So copious and exact is this department of the work, that no student can read the Greek orators to the best advantage unless he consults the Commentaries of Budæus. It appears from the Greek epistle subjoined to the work that the illustration of the forensic language of Athens and Rome was originally all that his plan embraced; and that when circumstances tempted him to extend the limits of his work, this still continued to be his chief object.”*

* Quarterly Review, vol. xxii., an article ascribed to the Bishop of London. The commentaries of Budæus are written in a very rambling and desultory manner, passing from one subject to another as a casual word may suggest the transition. Sic enim, he says, hos

commentarios scribere instituimus, ut quicquid in ordinem seriemque scribendi incurreret, vel ex diverticulo quasi obviam se offerret, ad id digredi. A large portion of what is valuable in this work has been transferred by Stephens to his Thesaurus. The Latin criticisms

15. These Commentaries of Budæus stand not only far above any thing else in Greek literature before the middle of the sixteenth century, but are alone in their class. What comes next, but at a vast interval, is the Greek grammar of Clenardus, printed at Louvain in 1530. It was, however, much beyond Budæus in extent of circulation, and probably, for this reason, in general utility. This grammar was continually reprinted with successive improvements, and, defective as, especially in its original state, it must have been, was far more perspicuous than that of Gaza, though not perhaps more judicious in principle. It was for a long time commonly used in France; and is in fact the basis of those lately or still in use among us; such as the Eton Greek grammar. The proof of this is, that they follow Clenardus in most of his rules, erroneous or not, and, nine times or more out of ten, in the choice of instances.*

of Budæus have also doubtless been borrowed.

Budæus and Erasmus are fond of writing Greek in their correspondence. Others had the same fancy; and it is curious, that they ventured upon what has wholly gone out of use since the language has been so well understood. But probably this is the reason that later scholars have avoided it. Neither of these great men shine much in elegance or purity. One of Budæus, 15 Aug. 1519, (in *Erasm. Epist. cccclv.*) seems often incorrect, and in the mere style of a schoolboy.

* Clenardus seems first to have separated simple from contracted

nouns, thus making ten declensions. Wherever he differs from Gaza, our popular grammars seem to have followed him. He tells us, that he had drawn up this for the use of his private pupils. Baillet observes, that the grammar of Clenardus, notwithstanding the mediocrity of his learning, has had more success than any other; those who have followed having mostly confined themselves to correcting and enlarging it. *Jugemens des Savans*, ii. 164. This is certainly true, as far as England is concerned; though the Eton grammar, bad as, in the present times, it appears, is in some degree an improvement on Clenardus.

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The account of syntax in this grammar, as well as that of Gaza, is wretchedly defective. A better treatise, in this respect, is by Varenius of Malines, *Syntaxis Linguæ Græcæ*, printed at Louvain about 1532. Another Greek grammar by Vergara, a native of Spain, has been extolled by some of the older critics, and depreciated by others.* The Greek lexicon, of which the first edition was printed at Basle in 1537, is said to abound in faults and inaccuracies of every description. The character given of it by Henry Stephens, even when it had been enlarged, if not improved, does not speak much for the means that the scholars of this age had possessed in labouring for the attainment of Greek learning.†

Editions
of Greek
authors.

16. The most remarkable editions of Greek authors from the Parisian press were those of Aristophanes in 1528, and of Sophocles in 1529; the former printed by Gourmont, the latter by Colinaeus; the earliest edition of an entire Diodorus

* Vergara de omnibus Græcæ linguæ grammaticæ partibus, 1573; rather 1537, for "deinde Parisiis," 1550, follows in Antonio, Bibl. Nova.

† H. Stephanus de typographiæ suæ statu. Gesner himself says of this lexicon, which sometimes bore his name: Circa annum 1537 lexicon Græco-Latinum, quod jam ante a diversis et innominatis nescio quibus miserè satis consarcinatum erat, ex Phavorini Camertis Lexico Græco ita auxi, ut nihil in eo extaret, quod non ut singulari fide, ita labore maximo adjicerem; sed typographus me inscio, et præter omnem expectationem

meam, exigam duntaxat accessio- nis meæ partem adjecit, reservans sibi forte auctarium ad sequentes etiam editiones. He proceeds to say, that he enlarged several other editions down to 1556, when the last that had been enriched by his additions appeared at Basle. Cæterum hoc anno, quo hæc scribo, 1562, Genevæ prodixisse audio longe copiosissimum emendatissimumque Græcæ linguæ thesaurum a Rob. Constantino incomparabilis doctrinæ viro, ex Joannis Crispini officinâ. Vide Gesneri Biblioth. Universalis, art. Conrad Gesner: this is part of a long account given here by Gesner of his own works.

in 1539, of Dionysius Halicarnassensis in 1546, and of Dio Cassius in 1548; the two latter by Robert Stephens. The first Greek edition of the elements of Euclid appeared at Basle in 1533, of Diogenes Laertius the same year, of five books of Diodorus in 1539, of Josephus in 1544; the first of Polybius in 1530, at Haguenaw. Besides these editions of classical authors, Basil, and other of the Greek fathers, occupied the press of Frobenius, under the superintendence of Erasmus. The publications of Latin authors by Badius Ascensius continued till his death in 1535. Colinæus began to print his small editions of the same class at Paris about 1521. They are in that cursive character, which Aldus had first employed.* The number of such editions, both in France and Germany, became far more considerable than in the preceding age. They are not, however, in general, much valued for correctness of text; nor had many considerable critics even in Latin philology yet appeared on this side of the Alps. Robert Stephens stands almost alone, who, by the publication of his *Thesaurus* in 1535, augmented in a subsequent edition of 1543, may be said to have made an epoch in this department of literature. The preceding dictionaries of Calepio and other compilers had been limited to an interpretation of single words, sometimes with reference to passages in the authors who had employed them. This produced, on the one hand, perpetual barbarisms and deviations from purity of idiom, while it gave rise in some to a fastidious

Latin The-
saurus of
R. Ste-
phens.

* Greswell's History of the early Parisian Greek Press.

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hypercriticism, of which Valla had given an example.* Stephens first endeavoured to exhibit their proper use, not only in all the anomalies of idiom, but in every delicate variation of sense to which the pure taste and subtle discernment of the best writers had adapted them. Such an analysis is perhaps only possible with respect to a language wherein the extant writers, and especially those who have acquired authority, are very limited in number; and even in Latin, the most extensive dictionary, such as has grown up long since the days of Robert Stephens, under the hands of Gesner, Forcellini, and Facciolati, or such as might still improve upon their labour, could only approach an unattainable perfection. What Stephens himself achieved would now be deemed far too defective for general use; yet it afforded the means of more purity in style than any could in that age have reached without unwearied exertion. Accordingly, it is to be understood, that while a very few scholars, chiefly in Italy, had acquired a facility and exactness of language, which has seldom been surpassed, the general style retained a great deal of barbarism, and neither in single words, nor always in mere grammar, can bear a critical eye. Erasmus is often incorrect, especially in his epistles, and says modestly of himself in the Ciceronianus, that he is hardly to be named among writers at all, unless blotting a great deal of paper with ink is enough to make one. He is however among the best of

* Vives de causis corrupt. art. another work, that there was no (Opera Lud. Vives, edit. Basle, full and complete dictionary of 1555, i. 358.) He observes, in Latin. Id. p. 475.

his contemporaries, if a vast command of Latin phrase, and a spirited employment of it, may compensate for some want of accuracy. Budæus, as has been already said, is hard and unpolished. Vives assumes, that he has written his famous and excellent work on the corruption of the sciences with some elegance; but this he says in language which hardly warrants the boast.* In fact, he is by no means a good writer. But Melanchthon excelled Erasmus by far in purity of diction, and correctness of classical taste. With him we may place Calvin in his Institutes, and our countryman Sir John Cheke, as distinguished from most other cisalpine writers of this period by the merit of what is properly called style. Bunel of Toulouse is reckoned the best model of language in this period. The praise, however, of writing pure Latin, or the pleasure of reading it, is dearly bought when accompanied by such vacuity of sense as we experience in the elaborate epistles of Paulus Manutius, and the Ciceronian school in Italy.

17. Francis I. has obtained a glorious title, the Father of French literature. The national propensity (or what once was such) to extol kings may have had something to do with this; for we never say the same of Henry VIII. In the early part of his reign he manifested a design to countenance ancient literature by public endowments. War,

Progress of
learning in
France.

* Nitorem præterea sermonis addidi aliquem, et quod non expediret res pulcherrimas sordide ac spurie vestiri, et ut studiosi elegantiarum [orum?] literarum non perpetuo in vocum et sermonis

cognitione adhærescerent; quod hactenus fere accidit, tædio nimium infrugiferæ ac horridæ molestiæ, quæ in percipiendis artibus diutissime erat devorata. i. 324.

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V.

and unsuccessful war, sufficiently diverted his mind from this scheme. But in 1531, a season of peace, he established the royal college of three languages in the university of Paris, which did not quite deserve its name till the foundation of a Latin professorship in 1534. Vatable was the first professor of Hebrew, and Danés of Greek. In 1545 it appears that there were three professors of Hebrew in the royal college, three of Greek, one of Latin, two of mathematics, one of medicine, and one of philosophy. But this college had to encounter the jealousy of the university, tenacious of its ancient privileges, which it fancied to be trampled upon, and stimulated by the hatred of the pretended philosophers, the scholastic dialecticians, against philological literature. They tried to get the parliament on their side; but that body, however averse to innovation, of which it gave in this age, and long afterwards, many egregious proofs, was probably restrained by the king's known favour to learning from obstructing the new college as much as the university desired.* Danés had a colleague and successor as Greek professor in a favourite pupil of Budæus, and a good scholar, Toussain, who handed down the lamp in 1547 to one far more eminent, Turne-

* The faculty of theology in 1530 condemned these propositions: 1. Scripture cannot be well understood without Greek and Hebrew; 2. A preacher cannot explain the epistle and gospel without these languages. In the same year they summoned Danés and Vatable with two more to appear in parliament, that they might be forbidden to explain scripture by the Greek and Hebrew, without permission of the university; or

to say, the Hebrew, or the Greek, is so and so; lest they should injure the credit of the Vulgate. They admitted, however, that the study of Hebrew and Greek was praiseworthy in skilful and orthodox theologians, disposed to maintain the inviolable authority of the Vulgate. *Contin. de Fleury, Hist. Ecclesiast.*, xxvii. 233. See also Gaillard, *Hist. de François I.*, vi. 289.

bus. Under such a succession of instructors, it may be naturally presumed that the knowledge of Greek would make some progress in France. And no doubt the great scholars of the next generation were chiefly trained under these men. But the opposition of many, and the coldness almost of all, in the ecclesiastical order, among whom that study ought principally to have flourished, impeded in the sixteenth century, as it has perhaps ever since, the diffusion of Grecian literature in all countries of the Romish communion. We do not find much evidence of classical, at least of Greek, learning in any university of France, except that of Paris, to which students repaired from every quarter of the kingdom.* But a few once distinguished names of the age of Francis I. deserve to be mentioned. William Cop, physician to the king, and John Ruel, one of the earliest promoters of botanical science, the one translator of Galen, the other of Dioscorides; Lazarus Baif, a poet of some eminence in that age, who rendered two Greek tragedies into French verse; with a few rather more obscure, such as Petit, Pin, Deloin, De Chatel, who are cursorily mentioned in literary history, or to whom Erasmus sometimes alludes. Let us not forget John Grollier, a gentleman who, having filled with honour some public employments, became the first perhaps on this side of the Alps who formed a very extensive library and collection of medals. He was the friend and patron of the

* We find, however, that a Greek and Latin school was set up in the diocese of Sadolet (Carpentras), about 1533; he endeavoured to procure a master from Italy, and seems, by a letter of the year 1540, to have succeeded. Sadol. Epist., lib. ix. and xvi.

CHAP. V. learned during a long life; a character little affected in that age by private persons of wealth on the less sunny side of the Alps. Grollier's library was not wholly sold till the latter part of the seventeenth century.*

Learning
in Spain.

18. In Spain, the same dislike of innovation stood in the way. Greek professorships existed, however, in the universities; and Nunnes, usually called Pincianus (from the Latin name for the city of Valladolid), a disciple of Lebrixa, whom he surpassed, taught the language at Alcala, and afterwards at Salamanca. He was the most learned man Spain had possessed; and his edition of Seneca, in 1536, has obtained the praise of Lipsius.† Resende, the pupil of Arias Barbosa and Lebrixa in Greek, has been termed the restorer of letters in Portugal. None of the writings of Resende, except a Latin grammar, published in 1540, fall within the present period; but he established, about 1531, a school at Lisbon, and one afterwards at Evora, where Estaço, a man rather better known, was educated.‡ School divinity and canon law overrode all liberal studies throughout the Peninsula; of which the catalogue of books at the end of Antonio's *Bibliotheca Nova* is a sufficient witness.

Effects of
Reformation
on
learning.

19. The first effects of the great religious schism in Germany were not favourable to classical literature.§ An all-absorbing subject left neither relish nor leisure for human studies. Those who had made the greatest advances in learning were them-

* Biog. Univ., Grollier.

† Antonio, *Bibl. Nova*. Biogr.

‡ Biogr. Univ.

§ Erasm. *Epist.* passim.

selves generally involved in theological controversy; and, in some countries, had to encounter either personal suffering on account of their opinions, or, at least, the jealousy of a church that hated the advance of knowledge. The knowledge of Greek and Hebrew was always liable to the suspicion of heterodoxy. In Italy, where classical antiquity was the chief object, this dread of learning could not subsist. But few learned much of Greek in these parts of Europe without some reference to theology *, especially to the grammatical interpretation of the Scriptures. In those parts which embraced the Reformation a still more threatening danger arose from the distempered fanaticism of its adherents. Men who interpreted the Scripture by the Spirit could not think human learning of much value in religion; and they were as little likely to perceive any other advantage it could possess. There seemed, indeed, a considerable peril, that, though the authority of Carlostadt, or even of Luther, the lessons of Crocus and Mosellanus would be totally forgotten.† And this would very probably have been the case, if one man, Melancthon, had not perceived the necessity of preserving human learning as a bulwark to theology itself, against the wild waves of enthusiasm. It was owing to him that both the study of the Greek and Latin languages, and that of the Aristotelian philosophy, were maintained in Germany. Nor did his activity content itself with

* *Erasm. Adag. chil. iv. c. v. § 1.*
Vives, apud Meiners, *Vergl. der*
sitten, ii. 737.

† Seckendorf, p. 198.

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V.

animating the universities. The schools of preparatory instruction, which had hitherto furnished merely the elements of grammar, throwing the whole burthen of philological learning on the universities, began before the middle of the century to be improved by Melanchthon, with the assistance of a friend, even superior to him, probably, in that walk of literature, Joachim Camerarius. "Both these great men," says Eichhorn, "laboured upon one plan, upon the same principle, and with equal zeal; they were, in the strictest sense, the fathers of that pure taste and solid learning by which the next generation was distinguished." Under the names of Lycæum or Gymnasium, these German schools gave a more complete knowledge of the two languages, and sometimes the elements of philosophy.*

Sturm's
account of
German
schools.

20. We derive some acquaintance with the state of education in this age from the writings of John Sturm, than whom scarce any one more contributed to the cause of letters in Germany. He became in 1538, and continued for above forty years, rector of a celebrated school at Strasburg. Several treatises on education, especially one, *De Literarum Ludis rectè instituendis*, bear witness to his assiduity. If the scheme of classical instruction which he has here laid down may be considered as one actually in use, there was a solid structure of learning erected in the early years of life, which none of our modern academies would pretend to emulate. Those who feel any curiosity

* Eichhorn, iii. 254. et post.

about the details of this course of education, which seems almost too rigorous for practice, will find the whole in Morhof's Polyhistor.* It is sufficient to say, that it occupies the period of life between the ages of six and fifteen, when the pupil is presumed to have acquired a very extensive knowledge of the two languages. Trifling as it may appear to take notice of this subject, it serves at least as a test of the literary pre-eminence of Germany. For we could, as I conceive, trace no such education in France, and certainly not in England.

21. The years of the life of Camerarius correspond to those of the century. His most remarkable works fall partly into the succeeding period; but many of the editions and translations of Greek authors, which occupied his laborious hours, were published before 1550. He was one of the first who knew enough of both languages, and of the subjects treated, to escape the reproach which has fallen on the translators of the fifteenth century. His Thucydides, printed in 1540, was superior to any preceding edition. The universities of Tubingen and Leipsic owed much of their prosperity to his superintending care. Next to Camerarius among the German scholars, we may place Simon Grynæus, professor of Greek at Heidelberg in 1523, and translator of Plutarch's Lives. Micyllus, his successor in this office, and author of a treatise *De re metrica*, of which Melanchthon speaks in high terms of praise, was more cele-

Learning
in Ger-
many.

* Lib. ii. c. 10.

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V.

brated than most of his countrymen for Latin poetry. Yet in this art he fell below Eobanus Hessus, whose merit is attested by the friendship of Erasmus, Melanchthon, and Camerarius, as well as by the best verses that Germany had to boast. It would be very easy to increase the list of scholars in that empire; but we should find it more difficult to exhaust the enumeration. Germany was not only far elevated in literary progress above France, but on a level, as we may fairly say, with Italy herself. The university of Marburg was founded in 1526, that of Copenhagen in 1539, of Königsberg in 1544, of Jena in 1548.

In Eng-
land.
Linacre.

22. We come now to investigate the gradual movement of learning in England, the state of which about 1520 we have already seen. In 1521, the first Greek characters appear in a book printed at Cambridge, Linacre's Latin translation of Galen de Temperamentis, and in the title-page, but there only, of a treatise *περι Διαταξης*, by Bullock. They are employed several times for quotations in Linacre de Emendata Structura Orationis, 1524.* This treatise is chiefly a series of grammatical remarks, relating to distinctions in the Latin language now generally known. It must have been highly valuable, and produced a considerable effect in England, where nothing of that superior criticism had been attempted. In order to

* The author begins by bespeaking the reader's indulgence for the Greek printing. Pro tuo candore, optime lector, æquo animo feras, si quæ literæ in exemplis Hellenismi vel tonis, vel spiritibus, vel

affectionibus careant. Iis enim non satis erat instructus typographus, videlicet recens ab eo fuis characteribus Græcis, nec parata ea copia quæ ad hoc agendum opus est.

judge of its proper merit, it should be compared with the antecedent works of Valla and Perotti. Every rule is supported by authorities; and Linacre, I observe, is far more cautious than Valla in asserting what is not good Latin, contenting himself, for the most part, with showing what is. It has been remarked that, though Linacre formed his own style on the model of Quintilian, he took most of his authorities from Cicero. This treatise, the first fruits of English erudition, was well received, and frequently printed on the Continent. Melanchthon recommended its use in the schools of Germany. Linacre's translation of Galen has been praised by Sir John Cheke, who in some respects bears rather hardly on his learned precursor.*

23. Croke, who became tutor to the duke of Richmond, son of Henry VIII., did not remain at Cambridge long after the commencement of this period. But in 1524, Robert Wakefield, a scholar of some reputation, who had been professor in a German university, opened a public lecture there in Greek, endowed with a salary by the king. We know little individually of his hearers; but, notwithstanding the confident assertions of Antony Wood, there can be no doubt that Cambridge was, during the whole of this reign, at least on a level with the sister university, and indeed, to speak plainly, above it. Wood enumerates several persons educated at Oxford about this time, sufficiently skilled in Greek to write in that language, or to translate from it, or to comment upon Greek

Lectures in
the uni-
versities.

* Johnson's Life of Linacre.

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V.

authors. The list might be enlarged by the help of Pits; but he is less of a scholar than Wood. This much, after all, is certain, that the only editions of classical authors published in England before 1540, except those already mentioned, are five of Virgil's *Bucolics*, two of a small treatise of Seneca, with one of Publius Syrus; all evidently for the mere use of school-boys. Lectures in Greek and Latin were, however, established in a few colleges at Oxford.

Greek per-
haps taught
to boys.

24. If Erasmus, writing in 1528, is to be believed, the English boys were wont to disport in Greek epigrams.* But this must be understood as only applicable to a very few, upon whom some extraordinary pains had been bestowed. Thus Sir Thomas Elyot, in his *Governor*, first published in 1531, points out a scheme of instruction which comprehends the elements of the Greek language. There is no improbability in the supposition, and some evidence to support it, that the masters of our great schools, a Lily, a Cox, an Udal, a Nowell, did not leave boys of quick parts wholly unacquainted with the rudiments of a language they so much valued.† It tends to confirm this supposition, that in the

* An tu credidisses unquam fore, ut apud Britannos aut Batavos pueri Græcè garrirent, Græcis epigrammatiis non infeliciter luderent? Dial. de Pronuntiatione, p. 48. edit. 1528.

† Churton, in his *Life of Nowell*, says that he taught the Greek testament to the boys at Westminster school, referring for authority to a passage in Strype, which I have not been able to find. There is nothing at all improbable in the

fact. These inquiries will be deemed too minute by some in this age. But they are not unimportant in their bearing on the history of literature; and an exaggerated estimate of English learning in the age of the Reformation generally prevails. Sir Thomas Pope, founder of Trinity college, Oxford, observes in a letter to Cardinal Pole in 1556, that when he was "a young scholar at Eton, the Greek tongue was growing apace; the

statutes of the new cathedrals established by Henry in 1541, it is provided, that there shall be a grammar-school for each, with a head master, "learned in Latin and Greek." Such statutes, however, are not conclusive evidences that they were put in force.* In the statutes of Wolsey's intended foundation at Ipswich, some years earlier, though the course of instruction is amply detailed, we do not find it extend to the merest elements of Greek.† It is curious to compare this with the course prescribed by Sturm for the German schools.

25. But English learning was chiefly indebted for its more rapid advance to two distinguished members of the university of Cambridge, Smith, afterwards secretary of state to Elizabeth, and Cheke. The former began to read the Greek lecture in 1533. And both of them, soon afterwards, combined to bring in the true pronunciation of Greek, upon which Erasmus had already written. The early students of that language, receiving their instructions from natives, had acquired the vicious uniformity of sounds belonging to the corrupted dialect. Reuchlin's school, of which Melancthon was one, adhered to this, and were called Itacists, from the continual recurrence of the sound of Iota in modern Greek, being thus distinguished from the Etists of Erasmus's party. ‡ Smith and Cheke

Teaching
of Smith at
Cambridge.

study of which is now alate much decayed." Warton, iii. 279. I do not think this implies more than a reference to the time, which was about 1520.

* Warton, iii. 265.

† Strype's Ecclesiast. Memorials. Appendix, No. 35.

‡ Eichhorn, iii. 217. Melancthon, in his Greek grammar, follows Reuchlin; Luscinius is on the side of Erasmus. Ibid. In

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V.

proved by testimonies of antiquity, that the latter were right; and "by this revived pronunciation," says Strype, "was displayed the flower and plentifulness of that language, the variety of vowels, the grandeur of diphthongs, the majesty of long letters, and the grace of distinct speech.* Certain it is, that about this time some Englishmen began to affect a knowledge of Greek. Sir Ralph Sadler, in his embassy to the king of Scotland, in 1540, had two or three Greek words embroidered on the sleeves of his followers, which led to a ludicrous mistake on the part of the Scotch bishops. Scotland, however, herself was now beginning to receive light; the Greek language was first taught in 1534 at Montrose, which continued for many years to be what some call a flourishing school.† But the whole number of books printed in Scotland before the middle of the century was only seven. No classical author, or even a grammar, is among these.‡

very recent publications, I observe that attempts have been made to set up again the "*lugubres sonos, et illud flebile iota*" of the modern Greeks. To adopt their pronunciation, even if right, would be buying truth very dear.

* Strype's *Life of Smith*, p. 17. "The strain I heard was of a higher mood." I wonder what author honest John Strype has copied or translated in this sentence; for he never leaves the ground so far in his own style.

† M'Crie's *Life of Knox*, i. 6., and Note C. p. 342.

‡ The list in Herbert's *History of Printing*, iii. 468., begins with

the breviary of the church of Aberdeen; the first part printed at Edinburgh in 1509, the second in 1510. A poem without date, addressed to James V., *de suscepto regni regimine*, which seems to be in Latin, and must have been written about 1528, comes the nearest to a learned work. Two editions of Lindsay's poems, two of a translation of Hector Boece's chronicles, two of a temporary pamphlet called *Scotland's Complaint*, with one of the statutes of the kingdom, printed in pursuance of an act of parliament passed in 1540, and a religious tract by one Balnave, compose the rest.

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V.Succeeded
by Cheke.

26. Cheke, successor of Smith as lecturer in Greek at Cambridge, was appointed the first royal professor of that language in 1540, with a respectable salary. He carried on Smith's scheme, if indeed it were not his own, for restoring the true pronunciation, in spite of the strenuous opposition of bishop Gardiner, chancellor of the university. This prelate, besides a literary controversy in letters between himself and Cheke, published at Basle in 1555, interfered, in a more orthodox way, by prohibiting the new style of speech in a decree which, for its solemnity, might relate to the highest articles of faith. Cheke however in this, as in greater matters, was on the winning side; and the corrupt pronunciation was soon wholly forgotten.

Ascham's
character
of Cam-
bridge.

27. Among the learned men who surrounded Cheke at Cambridge, none was more deserving than Ascham; whose knowledge of ancient languages was not shown in profuse quotation, or enveloped in Latin phrase, but served to enrich his mind with valuable sense, and taught him to transfer the firmness and precision of ancient writers to our own English, in which he is nearly the first that deserves to be named, or that is now read. He speaks in strong terms of his university. "At Cambridge also, in St. John's college, in my time, I do know that not so much the good statutes as two gentlemen of worthy memory, Sir John Cheke and Dr. Redman, by their only example of excellency in learning, of godliness in living, of diligence in studying, of counsel in exhorting, by good order in all things, did breed up so many learned men in that one college of St. John's at one time as

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I believe the whole university of Louvain in many years was never able to afford.* Lectures in humanity, that is, in classical literature, were, in 1535, established by the king's authority in all colleges of the university of Oxford where they did not already exist; and in the royal injunctions at the same time for the reformation of academical studies a regard to philological learning is enforced.†

Wood's account of
Oxford.

28. Antony Wood, though he is by no means always consistent, gives rather a favourable account of the state of philological learning at Oxford in the last years of Henry VIII. There can, indeed, be no doubt that it had been surprisingly increasing in all England through his reign. More grammar schools, it is said by Knight, were founded in thirty years before the Reformation, meaning, I presume, the age of Henry, than in three hundred years preceding. But the suddenness with which the religious establishment was changed on the ac-

* Ascham's Schoolmaster. In the *Life of Ascham* by Grant, prefixed to the former's epistles, he enumerates the learned of Cambridge about 1530. Ascham was himself under Pember, homini Græcæ linguæ admirabili facultate excultissimo. The others named are Day, Redman, Smith, Cheke, Ridley, Grindal (not the archbishop), Watson, Haddon, Pilkington, Horn, Christopherson, Wilson, Seton, et infiniti alii excellenti doctrinâ præditi. Most of these are men afterwards distinguished in the church on one side or the other. This is a sufficient refutation of Wood's idle assertion of the superiority of Oxford; the fact seems to have been wholly otherwise. Ascham himself, in a letter without date,

but evidently written about the time that the controversy of Cheke and Gardiner began, praises thus the learning of Cambridge. Aristoteles nunc et Plato, quod factum est etiam apud nos hic quinquennium, in sua lingua a pueris leguntur. Sophocles et Euripides sunt hic familiariores, quam olim Plautus fuerat, cum tu hic eras. Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, magis in ore et manibus omnium tenentur, quam tum Titus Livius, etc. *Ibid.* p. 74. What then can be thought of Antony Wood when he says, "Cambridge was in the said king's reign overspread with barbarism and ignorance, as 'tis often mentioned by several authors?" *Hist. and Antiq. of Oxford*, A.D. 1545.

† Warton, iii. 272.

cession of Edward, and still more the rapacity of the young king's council, who alienated or withheld the revenues designed for the support of learning, began to cloud the prospect before the year 1550.* Wood, in reading whom allowance is to be made for a strong, though not quite avowed bias towards the old system of ecclesiastical and academic government, inveighs against the visitors of the university appointed by the crown in 1548, for burning and destroying valuable books. And this seems to be confirmed by other evidence. It is true that these books, though it was a vile act to destroy them, would have been more useful to the English antiquary than to the classical student. Ascham, a contemporary protestant, denies that the university of Cambridge declined at all before the accession of Mary in 1553.

29. Edward himself received a learned education, and, according to Ascham, read the ethics of Aristotle in Greek. Of the princess Elizabeth, his favourite pupil, we have a similar testimony.†

Education
of Edward
and his
sisters.

* Strype, ii. 258. Todd's *Cramer*, ii. 33.

† Of the king he says: *Dialecticam didicit, et nunc Græcè discit Aristotelis Ethica. Eo progressus est in Græca lingua, ut in philosophia Ciceronis ex Latinis Græca facillime faciat.* Dec. 1550. Ascham, *Epist.* iv. Elizabeth spoke French and Italian as well as English; Latin fluently and correctly; Greek tolerably. She began every day by reading the Greek testament, and afterwards the orations of Isocrates, and tragedies of Sophocles. Some years afterwards, in 1555, he writes of her to Sturm: *Domina Elizabeth et ego una legimus Græcè ora-*

tiones Æschinis et Demosthenis περι στεφανου. Illa prælegit mihi, et primo aspectu tam scienter intelligit non solum proprietatem linguæ et oratoris sensum, sed totam causæ contentionem, populi scita, consuetudinem et mores illius urbis, ut summopere admireris. p. 53. In 1560 he asserts, that there are not four persons, in court or college (in aula, in academia), who know Greek better than the Queen.

Habemus Angliæ reginam, says Erasmus long before of Catherine, feminam egregiè doctam, cujus filia Maria scribit bene Latinas epistolas. Thomæ Mori domus nihil aliud quam musarum est domicilium. *Epist.* mxxiv.

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Mary was not by any means illiterate. It is hardly necessary to mention Jane Grey and the wife of Cecil. Their proficiency was such as to excite the admiration of every one, and is no measure of the age in which they lived. And their names carry us on a little beyond 1550, though Ascham's visit to the former was in that year.

The progress of learning is still slow.

30. The reader must be surprised to find that, notwithstanding these high and just commendations of our scholars, no Greek grammars or lexicons were yet printed in England, and scarcely any works in that or the Latin languages. In fact, there was no regular press in either university at this time, though a very few books had been printed in each about 1520; nor had they one till near the end of Elizabeth's reign. Reginald Wolfe, a German printer, obtained a patent, dated Apr. 19th, 1541, giving him the exclusive right to print in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and also Greek and Latin grammars, though mixed with English, and charts and maps. But the only productions of his press before the middle of the century, are two homilies of Chrysostom, edited by Cheke in 1543. Elyot's Latin and English Dictionary, 1538, was the first, I believe, beyond the mere vocabularies of school-boys; and it is itself but a meagre performance.* Latin grammars were of course so frequently published, that it has not been worth

* Elyot boasts that this "contains a thousand more Latin words than were together in any one dictionary published in this realm at the time when I first began to write this commentary." Though

far from being a good, or even, according to modern notions, a tolerable dictionary, it must have been of some value at the time. It was afterwards much augmented by Cooper.

while to take notice of them. But the Greek and Latin lexicon of Hadrian Junius, though dedicated to Edward VI., and said to have been compiled in England (I know not how this could be the case), being the work of a foreigner, and printed at Basle in 1548, cannot be reckoned as part of our stock.*

31. It must appear on the whole, that under Edward VI. there was as yet rather a commendable desire of learning, and a few vigorous minds at work for their own literary improvement, than any such diffusion of knowledge as can entitle us to claim for that age an equality with the chief continental nations. The means of acquiring true learning were not at hand. Few books, as we have seen, useful to the scholar, had been published in England; those imported were of course expensive. No public libraries of any magnitude had yet been formed in either of the universities; those of private men were exceedingly few. The king had a library, of which honourable mention is made; and Cranmer possessed a good collection of books at Lambeth; but I do not recollect any other person of whom this is recorded.

Want of
books and
public
libraries.

32. The progress of philological literature in England was connected with that of the Reformation. The learned of the earlier generation were not all protestants, but their disciples were zealously such. They taunted the adherents of the

Destruction
of monas-
teries no
injury to
learning.

* Wood ascribes to one Tolley or Tolleius a sort of Greek grammar, *Progymnasmata Linguæ Græcæ*, dedicated to Edward VI. And Pits, in noticing also other works of the same kind, says of

this: *Habentur Monachii in Bavaria in bibliotheca ducali*. As no mention is made of such a work by Herbert or Dibdin, I had been inclined to think its existence apocryphal. It is certainly foreign.

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V.

old religion with ignorance ; and though by that might be meant ignorance of the Scriptures, it was by their own acquaintance with languages that they obtained their superiority in this respect. And here I may take notice, that we should be greatly deceived by acquiescing in the strange position of Warton, that the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536 and the next two years gave a great temporary check to the general state of letters in England.* This careless writer is inconsistent with himself ; for no one had a greater contempt for the monastic studies, dialectics and theology. But, as a desire to aggravate, in every possible respect, the supposed mischiefs of the dissolution of monasteries, is abundantly manifest in many writers later than Warton, I shall briefly observe, that men are deceived, or deceive others, by the equivocal use of the word learning. If good learning, *bonæ literæ*, which for our present purpose means a sound knowledge of Greek and Latin, was to be promoted, there was no more necessary step in doing so, than to put down bad learning, which is worse than ignorance, and which was the learning of the monks, so far as they had any at all. What would Erasmus have thought of one who should in his days have gravely intimated, that the abolition of monastic foundations would retard the progress of literature ? In what protestant country was it accompanied with such a consequence, and from whom, among the complaints sometimes made, do we hear this cause assigned ? I am ready to admit,

* Hist. of Engl. Poetry, iii. 268.

that in the violent courses pursued by Henry VIII. many schools attached to monasteries were broken up, and I do not think it impossible that the same occurred in other parts of Europe. It is also to be fully stated and kept in mind, that by the Reformation the number of ecclesiastics, and consequently of those requiring what was deemed a literate education, was greatly reduced. The English universities, as we are well aware, do not contain by any means the number of students that frequented them in the thirteenth century. But are we therefore a less learned nation than our fathers of the thirteenth century? Warton seems to lament, that "most of the youth of the kingdom betook themselves to mechanical or other illiberal employments, the profession of letters being now supposed to be without support or reward." Doubtless many who would have learned the Latin accidence, and repeated the breviary, became useful mechanics. But is this to be called, not rewarding the profession of letters? and are the deadliest foes of the Greek and Roman muses to be thus confounded with their worshippers? The loss of a few schools in the monasteries was well compensated by the foundation of others on a more enlightened plan and with much better instructors, and after the lapse of some years, the communication of substantial learning came in the place of that tincture of Latin which the religious orders had supplied. Warton, it should be remarked, has been able to collect the names of not more than four or five abbots and other regulars, in the time of Henry VIII., who either possessed

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some learning themselves, or encouraged it in others.

Ravisius
Textor.

33. We may assist our conception of the general state of learning in Europe, by looking at some of the books which were then deemed most usefully subsidiary to its acquisition. Besides the lexicons and grammatical treatises that have been mentioned, we have a work first published about 1522, but frequently reprinted, and in much esteem, the *Officina* of Ravisius Textor. Of this book Peter Danés, a man highly celebrated in his day for erudition, speaks as if it were an abundant storehouse of knowledge, admirable for the manner of its execution, and comparable to any work of antiquity. In spite of this praise, it is no more than a common-place book from Latin authors, and from translations of the Greek, and could deserve no regard except in a half-informed generation.

Conrad
Gesner.

34. A far better evidence of learning was given by Conrad Gesner, a man of prodigious erudition, in a continuation of his *Bibliotheca Universalis*, (the earliest general catalogue of books with an estimate of their merits), to which he gave the rather ambitious title of *Pandectæ Universales*, as if it were to hold the same place in general science that the *Digest* of Justinian does in civil law. It is a sort of index to all literature, containing references only, and therefore less generally useful, though far more learned and copious in instances, than the *Officina* of Ravisius. It comprehends, besides all ancient authors, the schoolmen and other writers of the middle ages. The references are sometimes very short, and more like hints to

one possessed of a large library, than guides to the general student. In connection with the *Bibliotheca Universalis*, it forms a literary history or encyclopædia, of some value to those who are curious to ascertain the limits of knowledge in the middle of the sixteenth century.

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V.

CHAP. VI.

HISTORY OF THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE IN EUROPE
FROM 1520 TO 1550.

Advance of the Reformation — Differences of Opinion — Erasmus — The Protestant Opinions spread farther — Their Prevalence in Italy — Reaction of Church of Rome — Theological Writings — Luther — Spirit of the Reformation — Translations of Scripture.

CHAP.
VI.

Progress of
the Re-
formation.

1. **T**HE separation of part of Europe from the church of Rome is the great event that distinguishes these thirty years. But as it is not our object to traverse the wide field of civil or ecclesiastical history, it will suffice to make a few observations rather in reference to the spirit of the times, than to the public occurrences that sprung from it. The new doctrine began to be freely preached, and with immense applause of the people, from the commencement of this period, or, more precisely, from the year 1522, in many parts of Germany and Switzerland; the duke of Deuxponts in that year, or, according to some authorities, in 1523, having led the way in abolishing the ancient ceremonies, and his example having been successively followed in Saxony, Hesse, Brandenburg, Brunswick, many imperial cities, and the kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden, by the disciples of Luther; while those who adhered to Zwingle made similar changes in several cantons of Switzerland.

CHAP.
VI.Inter-
ference of
civil power.

2. The magistrates generally proceeded, especially at the outset, with as great caution and equity as were practicable in so momentous a revolution; though perhaps they did not always respect the laws of the empire. They commonly began by allowing freedom of preaching, and forbade that any one should be troubled about his religion. This, if steadily acted upon, repressed the tumultuous populace, who were eager for demolishing images, the memorials of the old religion, as much as it did the episcopal courts, which, had they been strong enough, might have molested those who so plainly came within their jurisdiction. The Reformation depended chiefly on zealous and eloquent preachers; the more eminent secular clergy, as well as many regulars, having espoused its principles. They encountered no great difficulty in winning over the multitude; and when thus a decisive majority was obtained, commonly in three or four years from the first introduction of free preaching, the government found it time to establish, by a general edict, the abolition of the mass, and of such ceremonies as they did not deem it expedient to retain. The conflict between the two parties in Germany seems to have been less arduous than we might expect. It was usually accompanied by an expulsion of the religious of both sexes from their convents, a measure, especially as to women, unjust and harsh*,

* Bilibald Pirckheimer wrote to Melancthon complaining that a convent of nuns at Nuremberg, among whom were two of his sisters, had been molested and

insulted because they would not accept confessors appointed by the senate. *Res eo deducta est ut quicumque miserandas illas offendere et incessere audet, obse-*

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VI.

and sometimes by an alienation of ecclesiastical revenues to the purposes of the state; but this was not universal in Germany, nor was it countenanced by Luther. I cannot see any just reason to charge the Protestant princes of the empire with having been influenced generally by such a motive. In Sweden, however, the proceedings of Gustavus Vasa, who confiscated all ecclesiastical estates, subject only to what he might deem a sufficient maintenance for the possessors, have very much the appearance of arbitrary spoliation.*

Excitement
of revo-
lutionary
spirit.

3. But while these great innovations were brought in by the civil power, and sometimes with too despotic a contempt of legal rights, the mere breaking up of old settlements had so disturbed the minds of the people, that they became in-

quium Deo se præstitisse arbitretur. Idque non solum a viris agitur, sed et a mulieribus; et illis mulieribus, quarum liberis omnem exhibuere caritatem. Non solum enim viris, qui alios docere contendunt, se ipsos vero minime emendant, urbs nostra referta est, sed et mulieribus curiosis, garrulis et otiosis, quæ omnia potius quam domum propriam gubernare satagunt. Pirkheimer Opera, Frankf. 1610. p. 375. He was a moderate man, concurring with the Lutherans in most of their doctrine, but against the violation of monastic vows. Several letters passed between him and Erasmus. The latter, though he could not approve the hard usage of women, hated the monks so much, that he does not greatly disapprove what was done towards them. In Germaniâ multa virginum ac monachorum monasteria crudeliter direpta

sunt. Quidam magistratus agunt moderatius. Ejecerunt eos duntaxat, qui illic non essent professi, et vetuerunt novitios recipi; ademerunt illis curam virginum, et jus alibi concionandi quam in suis monasteriis. Breviter, absque magistratus permissu nihil licet illis agere. Videntur huc spectare, ut ex monasteriis faciant parochias. Existimant enim hos conjuratos phalangas et tot privilegiis armatos diutius ferri non posse. (Basil. Aug. 1525.) Epist. dccciv. Multis in locis durè tractati sunt monachi; verum plerique cum sint intolerabiles, alia tamen ratione corrigi non possunt. Epist. dcccvii.

* Gerdes. Hist. Evangel. Reform. Seckendorf, et alii supra nominati. The best account I have seen of the Reformation in Denmark and Sweden is in the third volume of Gerdes, p. 279, &c.

clined to further acts of destruction, and more sweeping theories of revolution. It is one of the fallacious views of the Reformation, to which we have adverted in a former page, to fancy that it sprung from any notions of political liberty, in such a sense as we attach to the word. But, inasmuch as it took away a great deal of coercive jurisdiction exercised by the bishops, without substituting much in its place, it did unquestionably relax the bonds of laws not always unnecessary; and inasmuch as the multitude were in many parts instrumental in destroying by force the exterior symbols of the Roman worship, it taught them a habit of knowing and trying the efficacy of that popular argument. Hence the insurrection of the German peasants in 1525 may, in a certain degree, be ascribed to the influence of the new doctrine; and, in fact, one of their demands was the establishment of the Gospel. But as the real cause of that rebellion was the oppressive yoke of their lords, which, in several instances before the Reformation was thought of, had led to similar efforts at relief, we should not lay too much stress on this additional incitement.*

4. A more immediate effect of overthrowing the ancient system was the growth of fanaticism, to which, in its worst shape, the antinomian extravagances of Luther yielded too great encouragement. But he was the first to repress the pretences of the Anabaptists†; and when he saw the

Growth of
fanaticism.

* Seckendorf.

† Id. Melancthon was a little staggered by the first Anabaptists, who appeared during the concealment of Luther in the castle of Wartburg. Magnis rationi-

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danger of general licentiousness which he had unwarily promoted, he listened to the wiser counsels of Melancthon, and permitted his early doctrine upon justification to be so far modified, or mitigated in expression, that it ceased to give apparent countenance to immorality; though his differences with the church of Rome, as to the very question from which he had started, thus became of less practical importance, and less tangible to ordinary minds than before.* Yet in his own writings we may find to the last such language

bus, he says, adducor certè ut contemnere eos nolim, nam esse in iis spiritus quosdam multis argumentis apparet, sed de quibus judicare præter Martinum nemo facile possit. As to infant baptism, he seemed to think it a difficult question. But the Elector observed that they passed for heretics already, and it would be unwise to moot a new point. Luther, when he came back, rejected the pretences of the Anabaptists at once.

* See two remarkable passages in Seckendorf, part ii. p. 90. and p. 106. The æra of what may be called the palinodia of early Lutheranism was in 1527, when Melancthon drew up instructions for the visitation of the Saxon churches. Luther came into this; but it produced that jealousy of Melancthon among the rigid disciples, such as Amsdorf and Justus Jonas, which led to the molestation of his latter years. In 1537, Melancthon writes to a correspondent: Scis me quædam minus horridè dicere, de prædestinatione, de assensu voluntatis, de necessitate obedientiæ nostræ, de peccato mortali. De his omnibus scio re

ipsa Lutherum sentire eadem, sed ineruditi quædam ejus φορικωτερα dicta, cum non videant quo pertineant, nimium amant. Epist. p. 445. (edit. 1647).

I am not convinced that this apology for Luther is sufficient. Words are of course to be explained, when ambiguous, by the context and scope of the argument. But when single detached aphorisms, or even complete sentences in a paragraph, bear one obvious sense, I do not see that we can hold the writer absolved from the imputation of that meaning, because he may somewhere else have used a language inconsistent with it. If the Colloquia Mensalia are to be fully relied upon, Luther continued to talk in the same antinomian strain as before, though he grew sometimes more cautious in writing. See chap. xii. of that work; and compare with the passages quoted by Milner, v. 517., from the second edition (in 1536) of his Commentary on the Galatians. It would be well to know if these occur in that of 1519. But Luther had not gone greater lengths than Melancthon himself.

as to the impossibility of sin in the justified man, who was to judge solely by an internal assurance as to the continuance of his own justification, as would now be universally condemned in all our churches, and is hardly to be heard from the lips of the merest enthusiast.

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5. It is well known that Zwinglius, unconnected with Luther in throwing off his allegiance to Rome, took in several respects rather different theological views, but especially in the article of the real presence, asserted by the Germans as vigorously as in the church of Rome, though with a modification sufficient, in the spirit of uncompromising orthodoxy, to separate them entirely from her communion, but altogether denied by the Swiss and Belgian reformers. The attempts made to disguise this division of opinion, and to produce a nominal unanimity by ambiguous and incoherent jargon, belong to ecclesiastical history, of which they form a tedious and not very profitable portion.

Differences
of Luther
and Zwin-
gle.

6. The Lutheran princes, who the year before had acquired the name of Protestants, by their protest against the resolutions of the majority in the diet of Spire, presented in 1530 to that held at Augsburg the celebrated confession, which embodies their religious creed. It has been said that there are material changes in subsequent editions, but this is denied by the Lutherans. Their denial can only be as to the materiality, for the fact is clear.*

Confession
of Augs-
burg.

* Bossuet, *Variations des Eglises Protestantes*, vol. i. Seckendorf, p. 170. Clement, *Bibliothèque Curieuse*, vol. ii. In the editions of 1531 we read: *De cœna Domini docent, quod corpus et sanguis*

CHAP.
VI.Conduct of
Erasmus.

7. Meantime, it was not all the former opponents of abuses in the church who now served under the banner of either Luther or Zwingli. Some few, like Sir Thomas More, went violently back to the extreme of maintaining the whole fabric of superstition; a greater number, without abandoning their own private sentiments, shrunk, for various reasons, from an avowed separation from the church. Such we may reckon Faber Stapulensis, the most learned Frenchman of that age after Budæus; such perhaps was Budæus himself*; and such were Bilibaldus Pirckheimer†, Petrus Mosellanus, Beatus Rhenanus, and Wimpfeling, all men of just renown in their time. Such, above all, was Erasmus himself, the precursor of bolder prophets than himself, who, in all his latter years, stood in a very unenviable state, exposed to the shafts of two parties who forgave no man that moderation which was a reproach to themselves. At the beginning of this period, he had certainly an esteem for Melancthon, Ecolampadius, and other reformers; and though already shocked by the violence of Luther, which he expected to ruin the cause altogether, had not begun to speak of him with dis-

Christi vere adsint, et distribuuntur vescentibus in cœna Domini, et improbant secus docentes. In those of 1540, it runs thus: De cœna Domini docent, quod cum pane et vino vere exhibeantur corpus et sanguis Christi vescentibus in cœna Domini.

* Budæus was suspected of Protestantism, and disapproved many things in his own church; but the

passages quoted from him by Gerdes, i. 186., prove that he did not mean to take the leap.

† Gerdes, vol. i. § 66—83. We have seen above the moderation of Pirckheimer in some respects. I am not sure, however, that he did not comply with the Reformation after it was established at Nuremberg.

approbation.* In several points of opinion, he professed to coincide with the German reformers; but his own temper was not decisive; he was capable of viewing a subject in various lights; his learning, as well as natural disposition, kept him irresolute; and it might not be easy to determine accurately the tenets of so voluminous a theologian. One thing was manifest, that he had greatly contributed to the success of the Reformation. It was said, that Erasmus had laid the egg, and Luther had hatched it. Erasmus afterwards, when more alienated from the new party, observed, that he had laid a hen's egg, but Luther had hatched a crow's.† Whatever was the bird, it pecked still at the church. In 1522, came out the *Colloquies of Erasmus*, a book even now much read, and deserving to be so. It was professedly designed for the instruction and amusement of youth; but both are conveyed at the expense of the prevalent usages in religion. The monkish party could not be blind to its effect. The faculty of theology at Paris, in 1526, led by one Beda, a most bigotted enemy of Erasmus, censured the *Collo-*

* Male metuo misero Luthero; sic undique fervet conjuratio; sic undique irritantur in illum principes, ac præcipuè Leo pontifex. Utinam Lutherus meum secutus consilium, ab odiosis illis ac seditiosis abstinuisset. Plus erat fructus et minus invidiæ. Parum esset unum hominem perire; si res hæc illis succedit, nemo feret illorum insolentiam. Non conquiescent donec linguas ac bonas literas omnes subverterint. Epist. dxxviii. Sept. 1520.

Lutherus, quod negari non potest, optimam fabulam suscepit, et Christi pene aboliti negotium summo cum orbis applausu cœperat agere. Sed utinam rem tantam gravioribus ac sedatioribus egisset consiliis, majoreque cum animi calamiq̃ moderatione; atque utinam in scriptis illius non essent tam multa bona, aut sua bona non vitiasset malis haud ferendis. Epist. dcxxxv. 3d Sept. 1521.

† Epist. dccxix. Dec. 1524.

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quies for slighting the fasts of the church, virginity, monkery, pilgrimages, and other established parts of the religious system. They incurred of course the displeasure of Rome, and have several times been forbidden to be read in schools. Erasmus pretended that in his *Ιχθυοφαγία* he only turned into ridicule the abuse of fasting, and not the ordinances of the church. It would be difficult, however, to find out this distinction in the dialogue, or, indeed, anything favourable to the ecclesiastical cause in the whole book of Colloquies. The clergy are every where represented as idle and corrupt. No one who desired to render established institutions odious could set about it in a shorter or surer way; and it would be strange if Erasmus had not done the church more harm by such publications than he could compensate by a few sneers at the reformers in his private letters. In the single year 1527, Colinaeus printed 24,000 copies of the Colloquies, all of which were sold.

Estimate
of it,

8. But about the time of this very publication we find Erasmus growing by degrees more averse to the radical innovations of Luther. He has been severely blamed for this by most Protestants; and doubtless, so far as an undue apprehension of giving offence to the powerful, or losing his pensions from the emperor and king of England might influence him, no one can undertake his defence. But it is to be remembered, that he did not by any means espouse all the opinions either of Luther or Zwingle; that he was disgusted at the virulent language too common among the reformers, and at the outrages committed by the

populace ; that he anticipated great evils from the presumptuousness of ignorant men in judging for themselves in religion ; that he probably was sincere in what he always maintained as to the necessity of preserving the communion of the Catholic church, which he thought consistent with much latitude of private faith ; and that, if he had gone among the reformers, he must either have concealed his real opinions more than he had hitherto done, or lived, as Melancthon did afterwards, the victim of calumny and oppression. He had also to allege, that the fruits of the Reformation had by no means shown themselves in a more virtuous conduct ; and that many heated enthusiasts were depreciating both all profane studies, and all assistance of learning in theology.*

* The letters of Erasmus, written under the spur of immediate feelings, are a perpetual commentary on the mischiefs with which the Reformation, in his opinion, was accompanied. *Civitates aliquot Germaniæ implentur erroribus, desertoribus monasteriorum, sacerdotibus conjugatis, plerisque famelicis ac nudis. Nec aliud quam saltatur, editur, bibitur ac subatur ; nec docent nec discunt ; nulla vitæ sobrietas, nulla sinceritas. Ubique sunt, ibi jacent omnes bonæ disciplinæ cum pietate.* (1527) *Epist. dcccii.* Satis jam diu audivimus, Evangelium, Evangelium, Evangelium ; mores Evangelicos desideramus. *Epist. dcccxlvi.* Duo tantum quærunt, censum et uxorem. Cætera præstat illis Evangelium, hoc est, potestatem vivendi ut volunt. *Epist. mvi.* Tales vidi mores (Basileæ) ut etiamsi minus displicuissent dogmata, non placuisset tamen

cum hujusmodi [sic] fœdus inire. *Epist. mlxvi.* Both these last are addressed to Pirckheimer, who was rather more a protestant than Erasmus ; so that there is no fair suspicion of temporising. The reader may also look at the 788th and 793d *Epistle*, on the wild doctrines of the Anabaptists and other reformers, and at the 731st, on the effects of Farel's first preaching at Basle in 1525. See also Bayle, Farel, note B.

It is become very much the practice with our English writers to censure Erasmus for his conduct at this time. Milner rarely does justice to any one who did not servilely follow Luther. And Dr. Cox, in his *Life of Melancthon*, p. 35., speaks of a third party, "at the head of which the learned, witty, vacillating, avaricious, and artful Erasmus is unquestionably to be placed." I do not deny his claim to this place ;

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VI.His con-
troversy
with
Luther.

9. In 1524, Erasmus, at the instigation of those who were resolved to dislodge him from a neutral station his timidity rather affected, published his *Diatribes de libero arbitrio*, selecting a topic upon which Luther, in the opinion of most reasonable

but why the last three epithets? Can Erasmus be shown to have vacillated in his tenets? If he had done so, it might be no great reproach; but his religious creed was nearly that of the moderate members of the church of Rome, nor have I observed any proof of a change in it. But vacillation may be imputed to his conduct. I hardly think this word is applicable; though he acted from particular impulses, which might make him seem a little inconsistent in spirit; and certainly wrote letters not always in the same tone, according to his own temper at the moment, or that of his correspondent. Nor was he avaricious; at least I know no proof of it; and as to the epithet artful, it ill applies to a man who was perpetually involving himself by an unguarded and imprudent behaviour. Dr. Cox proceeds to charge Erasmus with seeking a cardinal's hat. But of this there is neither proof nor probability; he always declared his reluctance to accept that honour, and I cannot think that in any part of his life he went the right way to obtain it.

Those who arraign Erasmus so severely, (and I am not undertaking the defence of every passage in his voluminous *Epistles*) must proceed either on the assumption that no man of his learning and ability could honestly remain in the communion of the church of Rome, which is the height of bigotry and ignorance; or that, according to his own religious

opinions, it was impossible for him to do so. This is somewhat more tenable, inasmuch as it can only be answered by a good deal of attention to his writings. But from various passages in them, it may be inferred, that, though his mind was not made up on several points, and perhaps for that reason, he thought it right to follow, in assent as well as conformity, the catholic tradition of the church, and above all, not to separate from her communion. The reader may consult, for Erasmus's opinions on some chief points of controversy, his *Epistles*, DCCCXXIII, DCCCCLXXVII, (which Jortin has a little misunderstood), MXXXV, MLIII, MXCIII. And see Jortin's own fair statement of the case, i. 274.

Melanchthon had doubtless a sweeter temper, and a larger measure of human charities than Erasmus, nor would I wish to vindicate one great man at the expense of another. But I cannot refrain from saying, that no passage in the letters of Erasmus is read with so much pain as that in which Melanchthon, after Luther's death, and writing to one not very friendly, says of his connection with the founder of the Reformation, *Tuli servitutem pœne deformem*, &c. *Epist. Melanchthon. p. 21.* (edit. 1647.) But the characters of literary men are cruelly tried by their correspondence, especially in an age when more conventional dissimulation was authorised by usage than at present.

men, was very open to attack. Luther answered in a treatise, *De servo arbitrio*, flinching not, as suited his character, from any tenet because it seemed paradoxical, or revolting to general prejudice. The controversy ended with a reply of Erasmus, entitled *Hyperaspistes*.* It is not to be understood, from the titles of these tracts, that the question of free will was discussed between Luther and Erasmus in a philosophical sense; though Melancthon in his *Loci Communes*, like the modern Calvinists, had combined the theological position of the spiritual inability of man with the metaphysical tenet of general necessity. Luther on most occasions, though not uniformly, acknowledged the freedom of the will as to indifferent actions, and

* Seckendorf took hold of a few words in a letter of Erasmus, to insinuate that he had taken a side against his conscience in writing his treatise *de libero arbitrio*. Jortin, acute as he was, seems to have understood the passage the same way, and endeavours to explain away the sense, as if he meant only that he had undertaken the task unwillingly. Milner of course repeats the imputation; though it must be owned that, perceiving the absurdity of making Erasmus deny what in all his writings appears to have been his real opinion, he adopts Jortin's solution. I am persuaded that they are all mistaken, and that Erasmus was no more referring to his treatise against Luther, than to the Trojan war. The words occur in an answer to a letter of Vives, written from London, wherein he had blamed some passages in the *Colloquies* on the usual grounds of their freedom as to ecclesiastical practices. Erasmus, rather piqued

at this, after replying to the observations, insinuates to Vives, that the latter had not written of his own free will, but at the instigation of some superior. *Verum, ut ingenue dicam, perdidimus liberum arbitrium. Illic mihi aliud dictabat animus, aliud scribebat calamus.* By a figure of speech far from unusual, he delicately suggests his own suspicion as Vives's apology. And the next letter of Vives leaves no room for doubt: *Liberum arbitrium non perdidimus, quod tu asserueris*, — words, that could have no possible meaning, upon the hypothesis of Seckendorf. There is nothing in the context that can justify it; and it is equally difficult to maintain the interpretation Jortin gives of the phrase, *aliud dictabat animus, aliud scribebat calamus*, which can mean nothing but that he wrote what he did not think. The letters are *decccxix. deccclxxi. deccclxxvi.* in Erasmus's *Epistles*; or the reader may turn to Jortin, i. 413.

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also as to what they called the works of the law. But he maintained that, even when regenerated and sanctified by faith and the Spirit, man had no spiritual free will; and as before that time he could do no good, so after it, he had no power to do ill; not, indeed, could he, in a strict sense, do either good or ill, God always working in him, so that all his acts were properly the acts of God, though, man's will being of course the proximate cause, they might, in a secondary sense, be ascribed to him. It was this that Erasmus denied, in conformity with the doctrine afterwards held by the council of Trent, by the church of England, and, if we may depend on the statements of writers of authority, by Melancthon and most of the later Lutherans. From the time of this controversy Luther seems to have always spoken of Erasmus with extreme ill-will; and if the other was a little more measured in his expressions, he fell not a jot behind in dislike.*

Character
of his
epistles.

10. The epistles of Erasmus, which occupy two folio volumes in the best edition of his works, are a vast treasure for the ecclesiastical and literary history of his times. Morhof advises the student

* Many of Luther's strokes at Erasmus occur in the *Colloquia Mensalia*, which I quote from the translation. "Erasmus can do nothing but cavil and flout, he cannot confute." "I charge you in my will and testament, that you hate and loath Erasmus, that viper." ch. xlv. "He called Erasmus an epicure and ungodly creature, for thinking that if God dealt with men here on earth as they deserved, it would not go so

ill with the good, or so well with the wicked." ch. vii. Lutherus, says the other, sic respondit (*diatribæ de libero arbitrio*) ut antehac in neminem virulentius; et homo suavis post editum librum per literas dejerat se in me esse animo candidissimo, ac propemodum postulat, ut ipsi gratias agam, quod me tam civiliter tractavit, longe aliter scripturus si cum hoste fuisset res. Ep. DCCCXXVI.

to common-place them ; a task which, even in his age, few would have spared leisure to perform, and which the good index of the Leyden edition renders less important. Few men carry on so long and extensive a correspondence without affording some vulnerable points to the criticism of posterity. The failings of Erasmus have been already adverted to ; it is from his own letters that we derive our chief knowledge of them. An extreme sensibility to blame in his own person, with little regard to that of others ; a genuine warmth of friendship towards some, but an artificial pretence of it too frequently assumed ; an inconsistency of profession both as to persons and opinions, partly arising from the different character of his correspondents, but in a great degree from the varying impulses of his ardent mind, tend to abate that respect which the name of Erasmus at first excites, and which, on a candid estimate of his whole life, and the tenor even of this correspondence, it ought to retain. He was the first conspicuous enemy of ignorance and superstition, the first restorer of Christian morality on a scriptural foundation, and, notwithstanding the ridiculous assertion of some moderns that he wanted theological learning, the first who possessed it in its proper sense, and applied it to its proper end.

11. In every succeeding year the letters of Erasmus betray increasing animosity against the reformers. He had long been on good terms with Zwingle and Ecolampadius, but became so estranged by these party differences, that he speaks of their

His alienation from the reformers increases.

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death with a sort of triumph.* He still however kept up some intercourse with Melancthon. The latter years of Erasmus could not have been happy; he lived in a perpetual irritation from the attacks of adversaries on every side; his avowed dislike of the reformers by no means assuaging the virulence of his original foes in the church, or removing the suspicion of lukewarmness in the orthodox cause. Part of this should fairly be ascribed to the real independence of his mind in the formation of his opinions, though not always in their expression, and to their incompatibility with the extreme doctrines of either side. But an habitual indiscretion, the besetting sin of literary men, who seldom restrain their wit, rendered this hostility far more general than it need have been, and, accompanied as it was with a real timidity of character, exposed him to the charge of insincerity, which he could

* Bene habet, quod duo Coryphæi perierint, Zuinglius in acie, Œcolampadius paulo post febri et apostemate. Quod si illis favisset *ευναλιος*, actum fuisset de nobis. Epist. mccv. It is of course to be regretted, that Erasmus allowed this passage to escape him, even in a letter. With Œcolampadius he had long carried on a correspondence. In some book the latter had said, Magnus Erasmus noster. This was at a time when much suspicion was entertained of Erasmus, who writes rather amusingly, in Feb. 1525, to complain, telling Œcolampadius that it was best neither to be praised or blamed by his party; but if they must speak of him, he would prefer their censure to being styled *noster*. Epist. dcccxxviii. Mil-

ner quotes this, leaving poor Erasmus to his reader's indignation for what he would insinuate to be a piece of the greatest baseness. But, in good truth, what right had Œcolampadius to use the word *noster*, if it could be interpreted as claiming Erasmus to his own side? He was not theirs, as Œcolampadius well knew, in exterior profession, nor theirs in the course they had seen fit to pursue.

It is just towards Erasmus to mention, that he never dissembled his affection for Lewis Berquin, the first martyr to protestantism in France, who was burned in 1528, even in the time of his danger. Epist. dcccclxxvi. Erasmus had no more inveterate enemies than in the university of Paris.

better palliate by the example of others than deny to have some foundation. Erasmus died in 1536, having returned to Basle, which, on pretence of the alterations in religion, he had quitted for Fri-burg in Brisgau a few years before. No differences of opinion had abated the pride of the citizens of Basle in their illustrious visiter. Erasmus lies interred in their cathedral, the earliest, except *Æcolampadius*, in the long list of the literary dead, which have rendered that cemetery conspicuous in Europe.

12. The most striking effect of the first preaching of the Reformation was that it appealed to the ignorant; and though political liberty, in the sense we use the word, cannot be reckoned the aim of those who introduced it, yet there predominated that revolutionary spirit which loves to witness destruction for its own sake, and that intoxicated self-confidence which renders folly mischievous. Women took an active part in religious dispute; and though in many respects the Roman catholic religion is very congenial to the female sex, we cannot be surprised that many ladies might be good protestants against the right of any to judge better than themselves. The translation of the New Testament by Luther in 1522, and of the Old a few years later, gave weapons to all disputants; it was common to hold conferences before the burgomasters of German and Swiss towns, who settled the points in controversy, one way or other, perhaps as well as the learned would have done.

Appeal of
the reform-
ers to the
ignorant.

13. We cannot give any attention to the story of the Reformation, without being struck by the ex-

Parallel of
those times
with the
present.

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traordinary analogy it bears to that of the last fifty years. He who would study the spirit of this mighty age may see it reflected as in a mirror from the days of Luther and Erasmus. Man, who, speaking of him collectively, has never reasoned for himself, is the puppet of impulses and prejudices, be they for good or for evil. These are, in the usual course of things, traditional notions and sentiments, strengthened by repetition, and running into habitual trains of thought. Nothing is more difficult, in general, than to make a nation perceive any thing as true, or seek its own interest in any manner, but as its forefathers have opined or acted. Change in these respects has been, even in Europe, where there is most of flexibility, very gradual; the work, not of argument or instruction, but of exterior circumstances slowly operating through a long lapse of time. There have been, however, some remarkable exceptions to this law of uniformity, or, if I may use the term, of *secular variation*. The introduction of Christianity seems to have produced a very rapid subversion of ancient prejudices, a very conspicuous alteration of the whole channel through which moral sentiments flow, in nations that have at once received it. This has also not unfrequently happened through the influence of Mohammedism in the East. Next to these great revolutions in extent and degree, stand the two periods we have begun by comparing; that of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and that of political innovation wherein we have long lived. In each, the characteristic features are a contempt for antiquity, a shifting of prejudices,

an inward sense of self-esteem leading to an assertion of private judgment in the most uninformed, a sanguine confidence in the amelioration of human affairs, a fixing of the heart on great ends, with a comparative disregard of all things intermediate. In each there has been so much of alloy in the motives, and, still more, so much of danger and suffering in the means, that the cautious and moderate have shrunk back, and sometimes retraced their own steps, rather than encounter evils which at a distance they had not seen in their full magnitude. Hence we may pronounce with certainty what Luther, Hutten, Carlostadt, what again More, Erasmus, Melanchthon, Cassander, would have been in the nineteenth century, and what our own contemporaries would have been in their times. But we are too apt to judge others, not as the individualities of personal character and the varying aspects of circumstances rendered them, and would have rendered us, but according to our opinion of the consequences, which, even if estimated by us rightly, were such as they could not determinately have foreseen.

14. In 1531, Zwingli lost his life on the field of battle. It was the custom of the Swiss that their pastors should attend the citizens in war to exhort the combatants, and console the dying. But the reformers soon acquired a new chief in a young man superior in learning and probably in genius, John Calvin, a native of Noyon in Picardy. His Institutions, published in 1536, became the textbook of a powerful body, who deviated in some few points from the Helvetic school of Zwingli.

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They are dedicated to Francis I., in language, good, though not perhaps as choice as would have been written in Italy, temperate, judicious, and likely to prevail upon the general reader, if not upon the king. This treatise was the most systematic and extensive defence and exposition of the protestant doctrine which had appeared. Without the overstrained phrases and wilful paradoxes of Luther's earlier writings, the Institutes of Calvin seem to contain most of his predecessor's theological doctrine, except as to the corporal presence. He adopted a middle course as to this, and endeavoured to distinguish himself from the Helvetic divines. It is well known that he brought forward the predestinarian tenets of Augustin more fully than Luther, who seems however to have maintained them with equal confidence. They appeared to Calvin, as doubtless they are, clearly deducible from their common doctrine as to the sinfulness of all natural actions, and the arbitrary irresistible conversion of the passive soul by the power of God. The city of Geneva, throwing off subjection to its bishop, and embracing the reformed religion in 1536, invited Calvin to an asylum, where he soon became the guide and legislator, though never the ostensible magistrate, of the new republic.

Increased
differences
among re-
formers.

15. The Helvetian reformers at Zurich and Bern were now more and more separated from the Lutherans; and in spite of frequent endeavours to reconcile their differences, each party, but especially the latter, became as exclusive and nearly as intolerant as the church which they had quitted. Among the Lutherans themselves, those who rigidly

adhered to the spirit of their founder's doctrine, grew estranged, not externally, but in language and affection, from the followers of Melanchthon.* Luther himself, who never withdrew his friendship

* Amsdorfius Luthero scripsit, viperam eum in sinu alere, me significans, omitto alia multa. Epist. Melanchthon, p. 450. (edit. 1647). Luther's temper seems to have grown more impracticable as he advanced in life. Melanchthon threatened to leave him. Amsdorf and that class of men flattered his pride. See the following letters. In one, written about 1549, he says: Tuli etiam antea servitutem pæne deformem, cum sæpe Lutherus magis suæ naturæ, in qua φιλονεικία erat haud exigua, quam vel personæ suæ, vel utilitati communi serviret. p. 21. This letter is too apologetical and temporising. Nec movi has controversias quæ distraxerunt rempublicam; sed incidi in motas, quæ cum et multæ essent et inexplicatæ, quodam simplici studio quærendæ veritatis, præsertim cum multi docti et sapientes initio applauderent, considerare eas cœpi. Et quanquam materias quasdam horridiores autor initio miscuerat, tamen alia vera et necessaria non putavi rejicienda esse. Hæc cum excerpta amplecterer, paulatim aliquas absurdas opiniones vel sustuli vel lenii. Melanchthon should have remembered, that no one had laid down these opinions with more unreserve, or in a more "horrid" way of disputation than himself in the first edition of his *Loci Communes*. In these and other passages, he endeavours to strike at Luther for faults which were equally his own, though doubtless not so long persisted in.

Melanchthon, in the first edition of the *Loci Communes*,

which will scarcely be found except in Von der Hardt, sums up the free-will question thus:

Si ad prædestinationem referas humanam voluntatem, nec in externis, nec in internis operibus ulla est libertas, sed eveniunt omnia juxta destinationem divinam.

Si ad opera externa referas voluntatem, quædam videtur esse, judicio naturæ, libertas.

Si ad affectus referas voluntatem, nulla plane libertas est, etiam naturæ judicio. This proves what I have said in another place, that Melanchthon held the doctrine of strict philosophical necessity. Luther does the same, in express words, once at least in the treatise *De servo arbitrio*, vol. ii. fol. 429. (edit. Wittenberg, 1554).

In an epistle often quoted, Melanchthon wrote: Nimis horridæ fuerunt apud nostros disputationes de fato, et disciplinæ nocuerunt. But a more thoroughly ingenuous man might have said *nostræ* for *apud nostros*. Certain it is, however, that he had changed his opinions considerably before 1540, when he published his *Moralis Philosophiæ Epitome*, which contains evidence of his holding the synergism, or activity and co-operation with divine grace, of the human will. See p. 39.

The animosity excited in the violent Lutherans by Melanchthon's moderation in drawing up the confession of Augsburg is shown in Camerarius, *Vita Melanchthon*, p. 124. (edit. 1696). From this time it continued to harass him till his death.

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from the latter, seems to have been alternately under his influence, and that of inferior men. The Anabaptists, in their well-known occupation of Munster, gave such proof of the tremendous consequences of fanaticism, generated, in great measure, by the Lutheran tenet of assurance, that the paramount necessity of maintaining human society tended more to silence these theological subtilities, than any arguments of the same class. And from this time that sect, if it did not lose all its enthusiasm, learned how to regulate it in subordination to legal and moral duties.

Reformed
tenets
spread in
England.

16. England, which had long contained the remnants of Wicliffe's followers, could not remain a stranger to this revolution. Tyndale's New Testament was printed at Antwerp in 1526; the first translation that had been made into English. The cause of this delay has been already explained; and great pains were taken to suppress the circulation of Tyndale's version. But England was then inclined to take its religion from the nod of a capricious tyrant. Persecution would have long repressed the spirit of free judgment, and the king, for Henry's life at least, have retained his claim to the papal honour conferred on him as defender of the faith, if "Gospel light," as Gray has rather affectedly expressed it, had not "flashed from Boleyn's eyes." But we shall not dwell on so trite a subject. It is less familiar to every one, that in Italy the seeds of the Reformation were early and widely sown. A translation of Melanchthon's *Loci Communes* under the name of Ippofilo da Terra Nigra, was printed at Venice in 1526, the very year of

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its appearance at Wittenberg ; the works of Luther, Zwingle, and Bucer, were also circulated under false names.* The Italian translations of Scripture made in the fifteenth century were continually reprinted ; and in 1530 a new version was published at Venice by Brucioli, with a preface written in a protestant tone.† The great intercourse of Italy with the cisalpine nations through war and commerce, and the partiality of Renée of France, duchess of Ferrara, to the new doctrines, whose disciples she encouraged at her court under the pretext of literature, contributed to spread an active spirit of inquiry. In almost every considerable city, between 1525 and 1540, we find proofs of a small band of protestants, not in general abandoning the outward profession of the church, but coinciding in most respects with Luther or Zwingle. It has lately been proved that a very early proselyte to the Reformation, and one whom we should least expect to find in that number, was Berni, before the completion, if not the commencement, of his labour on the *Orlando Innamorato* ; which he attempted to render in some places the vehicle of his disapprobation of the church. This may account for the freedom from indecency which distinguishes that poem, and contrasts with the great licentiousness of Berni's lighter and earlier productions. ‡

* Mc'Crie's Hist. of Reformation in Italy. Epigrams were written in favour of Luther as early as 1521. p. 32.

† Id. p. 53, 55.

‡ This curious and unexpected

fact was brought to light by Mr. Panizzi, who found a short pamphlet of extreme scarcity, and unnoticed, I believe, by Zeno or any other bibliographer (except Nicéroni, xxxviii. 76.), in the library of

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heterodoxy.

17. The Italians are an imaginative, but not essentially a superstitious people, or liable, nationally speaking, to the gloomy prejudices that master the reason. Among the classes, whose better education had strengthened and developed the acuteness and intelligence so general in Italy, a silent disbelief of the popular religion was far more usual than in any other country. In the majority, this has always taken the turn of a complete rejection of all positive faith; but, at the æra of the Re-

Mr. Grenville. It is written by Peter Paul Vergerio, and printed at Basle in 1554. This contains eighteen stanzas, intended to have been prefixed by Berni to the twentieth canto of the Orlando Innamorato. They are of a decidedly protestant character. For these stanzas others are substituted in the printed editions, much inferior, and, what is remarkable, almost the only indecent passage in the whole poem. Mr. Panizzi is of opinion, that great liberties have been taken with the Orlando Innamorato, which is a posthumous publication, the earliest edition being at Venice, 1541, five years after the author's death. Vergerio in this tract, the whole of which has been reprinted by Mr. P. in iii. 361. of his Boiardo, says of Berni: Costui quasi agli ultimi suoi anni non fù altro che carne e mondo; di che ci fanno ampia fede alcuni suoi capitoli e poesie, delle quali egli molti fogli imbrattò. Ma perchè il nome suo era scritto nel libro della vita, ne era possibile ch' egli potesse fuggire delle mani del celeste padre, &c. Veggendo egli che questo gran tiranno non permettea onde alcuno potesse comporre all' aperta di quei libri,

per li quali altri possa penetrare nella cognizione del vero, andando attorno per le man d' ognuno un certo libro profano chiamato innamoramento d' Orlando, che era inetto e mal composto, il Berna [sic] s' immaginò di fare un bel trattato; e ciò fù ch' egli si pose a racconciare le rime e le altre parti di quel libro, di che esso n' era ottimo artefice, e poi aggiugnendovi di suo alcune stanze, pensò di entrare con questa occasione e con quel mezzo (insin che d' altro migliore ne avesse potuto avere) ad insegnare la verità dell' Evangelio, &c. Whether Vergerio is wholly to be trusted in all this account, more of which will be found on reference to Panizzi's edition of the Orlando Innamorato, I must leave to the competent reader. The following expressions of Mr. P., though, I think, rather strong, will show the opinion of one conversant with the literature and history of those times. "The more we reflect on the state of Italy at that time, the more have we reason to suspect, that the reforming tenets were as popular among the higher classes in Italy in those days, as liberal notions in ours." p. 361.

formation especially, the substitution of Protestant for Romish Christianity was an alternative to be embraced by men of more serious temperaments. Certain it is, that we find traces of this aberration from orthodoxy, in one or the other form, through much of the literature of Italy, sometimes displaying itself only in censures of the vices of the clergy; censures, from which, though in other ages they had been almost universal, the rigidly Catholic party began now to abstain. We have already mentioned Pontanus and Mantuan. Trissino, in his *Italia Liberata*, introduces a sharp invective against the church of Rome.* The *Zodiacus Vitæ* of Manzolli, whose assumed Latin name, by which he is better known, was *Palingenius Stellatus*, teems with invectives against the monks, and certainly springs from a protestant source.† The first edition is of 1537, at Basle.

* This passage, which is in the sixteenth canto, will be found in Roscoe's *Leo X.* Append. No. 164.; but the reader would be mistaken in supposing, as Roscoe's language seems to imply, that it is only contained in the first edition of 1548. The fact is that Trissino cancelled these lines in the unsold copies of that edition, so that very few are found to contain them; but they are restored in the edition of the *Italia Liberata*, printed at Verona in 1729.

† The *Zodiacus Vitæ* is a long moral poem, the books of which are named from the signs of the zodiac. It is not very poetical, but by no means without strong passages of sense and spirit in a lax Horatian metre. The author has said more than enough to incur the suspicion of Lutheranism.

I have observed several proofs of this; the following will suffice:—

Sed tua præsertim non intret
limina quisquam
Frater, nec monachus, vel qua-
vis lege sacerdos.
Hos fuge; pestis enim nulla hac
immanior; hi sunt
Fæx hominum, fons stultitiæ,
sentina malorum,
Agnorum sub pelle lupi, mercede
colentes,
Non pietate Deum; falsa sub
imagine vecti
Decipiunt stolidos, ac religionis
in umbra
Mille actus vetitos, et mille
piacula condunt, &c.

Leo (lib. 5.).

I could find, probably, more decisive Lutheranism in searching through the poem, but have omitted to make notes in reading it.

CHAP. VI. But no one writer is more indignantly severe than Alamanni.*

Its progress
in the
literary
classes.

18. This rapid, though rather secret progress of heresy among the more educated Italians, could not fail to alarm their jealous church. They had not won over the populace to their side; for, though censures on the superior clergy were listened to with approbation in every country, there was little probability that the Italians would generally abjure modes of faith so congenial to their national temper, as to have been devised, or retained from heathen times, in compliance with it. Even of those who had associated with the reformers, and have been in consequence reckoned among them, some were far from intending to break off from a church which had been identified with all their prejudices and pursuits. Such was Flaminio, one of the most elegant of poets and best of men; and such was the accomplished and admirable Vittoria Colonna.† But those who had drunk deeper of the cup of free thought had no other resource, when their private assemblies had been detected, and their names proscribed, than to fly beyond the Alps. Bernard Ochino, a Capucin preacher of great eminence, being summoned to

* Ahi cieca gente, che l' hai
troppo 'n pregio;
Tu credi ben, che questa ria
semenza
Habbian più d' altri gratia e
privilegio;
Ch' altra trovi hoggi in lei vera
scienza
Che di simulation, menzogne e
frodi.
Beato 'l mondo, che sarà mai
senza, &c.

Satir. i.

The twelfth Satire concludes with a similar execration, in the name of Italy, against the church of Rome.

† M'Crie discusses at length the opinions of these two, p. 164—177., and seems to leave those of Flaminio in doubt; but his letters, published at Nuremberg in 1571, speak in favour of his orthodoxy.

Rome, and finding his death resolved upon, fled to Geneva. His apostacy struck his admirers with astonishment, and possibly put the Italians more on their guard against others. Peter Martyr, well known afterwards in England, soon followed him; the academy of Modena, a literary society highly distinguished, but long suspected of heresy, was compelled, in 1542, to subscribe a declaration of faith; and, though Lombardy was still full of secret protestants, they lived in continual terror of persecution during the rest of this period. The small reformed church of Ferrara was broken up in 1550; many were imprisoned and one put to death.*

19. Meantime the natural tendency of speculative minds to press forward, though checked at this time by the inflexible spirit of the leaders of the Reformation, gave rise to some theological novelties. A Spanish physician, Michael Reves, commonly called Servetus, was the first to open a new scene in religious innovation. The ancient controversies on the Trinity had long subsided; if any remained whose creed was not unlike that of the Arians, we must seek for them among the Waldenses, or other persecuted sects. But even this is obscure; and Erasmus, when accused of Arianism, might reply with apparent truth, that no heresy was more extinct. Servetus, however, though not at all an Arian, framed a scheme, not probably quite novel, which is a difficult matter, but sounding very unlike what

Servetus.

* Besides Dr. M'Crie's History of the Reformation in Italy, which has thrown a collected light upon a subject interesting and little familiar, I have made use of his

predecessor Gerdes, Specimen Italiae reformatæ; of Tiraboschi, viii. 150.; of Giannone, iv. 108. et alibi; and of Galluzzi, Istoria del Gran Ducato, ii. 292. 369.

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was deemed orthodoxy. Being an imprudent and impetuous man, he assailed the fundamental doctrines of reformers as much as of the Catholic church with none of the management necessary in such cases, as the title of his book, printed in 1531, *De Trinitatis erroribus*, is enough to show. He was so little satisfied with his own performance, that in a second treatise, called *Dialogues on the Trinity*, he retracts the former as ill written, though without having changed any of his opinions. These works are very scarce and obscurely worded, but the tenets seem to be nearly what are called Sabellian.*

Arianism
in Italy.

20. The Socinian writers derive their sect from a small knot of distinguished men, who met privately at Vicenza about 1540; including Lælius Socinus, at that time too young to have had any influence, Ochino, Gentile, Alciati, and some others. This fact has been doubted by Mosheim and M'Crie, and does not rest on much evidence; while some of the above names are rather improbable.† It is certain, however, that many of the Italian reformers held anti-trinitarian opinions, chiefly of the Arian form. M'Crie suggests, that these had been derived from Servetus; but it does not appear that they had any acquaintance, or concurred, in general, with him, who was very far from Arianism; and it is much more probable that their tenets originated among themselves. If, indeed, it were necessary to look for an heresiarch, a

* The original editions of the works of Servetus very rarely occur; but there are reprints of the last century, which themselves are by no means common.

† Lubienecius, *Hist. Reformat. Polonicae*. M'Crie's *Hist. of Reformation in Italy*, p. 154.

Spanish gentleman, resident at Naples, by name Valdes, is far more likely than Servetus. It is agreed that Valdes was one of the chief teachers of the Reformation in Italy; and he has also been supposed to have inclined towards Arianism.*

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21. Even in Spain, the natural soil of tenacious superstition, and the birthplace of the Inquisition, a few seeds of Protestantism were early sown. The first writings of Luther were translated into Spanish soon after their appearance; the Holy Office began to take alarm about 1530. Several suspected followers of the new creed were confined in monasteries, and one was burnt at Valladolid in 1541.† But in no country, where the Reformation was severely restrained by the magistrate, did it spread so extensively as in the Netherlands. Two Augustine monks were burned at Brussels in 1523, and their death had the effect, as Erasmus tells us, of increasing prodigiously the number of heretics.‡ From that time a bitter persecution

Protestants
in Spain
and Low
Countries.

* Dr. Mc'Crie is inclined to deny the Arianism of Valdes, and says it cannot be found in his writings (p. 122.); others have been of a different opinion. See Chalmers's Dictionary, art. Valdesso, and Bayle. His Considerations were translated into English in 1638; I can find no evidence as to this point one way or the other in the book itself, which betrays a good deal of fanaticism, and confidence in the private teaching of the Spirit. The tenets are high Lutheranism as to human action, and derived perhaps from the Loci Communes of Melancthon. Beza condemned the book.

† Mc'Crie's Hist. of Reformation in Spain.

‡ *Cœpta est carnificina. Tandem Bruxellæ tres Augustinenses [duo?] publicitus affecti sunt supplicio. Quæris exitum? Ea civitas antea purissima cœpit habere Lutheri discipulos, et quidem non paucos. Sævitus est et in Hollandiâ. Quid multis? Ubique fumos excitavit nuncius, ubicunque sævitiam exercuit Carmelita, ibi diceres fuisse factam hæresion sementem. Ep. mclxiii.* The history of the Reformation in the Low Countries has been copiously written by Gerard Brandt, to whose second and third books I refer the reader.

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was carried on, both by destroying books, and punishing their readers ; but most of the seventeen provinces were full of sectaries.

Order of
Jesuits.

22. Deeply shaken by all this open schism and lurking disaffection, the church of Rome seemed to have little hope but in the superstition of the populace, the precarious support of the civil power, or the quarrels of her adversaries. But she found an unexpected source of strength in her own bosom ; a green shoot from the yet living trunk of an aged tree. By a bull, dated the 27th of September, 1540, Paul III. established the order of Jesuits, planned a few years before by Ignatius Loyola. The leading rules of this order were, that a general should be chosen for life, whom every Jesuit was to obey as he did God ; and that besides the three vows of the regulars, poverty, chastity, and obedience, he should promise to go wherever the pope should command. They were to wear no other dress than the clergy usually did ; no regular hours of prayer were enjoined ; but they were bound to pass their time usefully for their neighbours, in preaching, in the direction of consciences, and the education of youth. Such were the principles of an institution which has, more effectually than any other, exhibited the moral power of a united association in moving the great unorganised mass of mankind.

Their po-
pularity.

23. The Jesuits established their first school in 1546, at Gandia in Catalonia, under the auspices of Francis Borgia, who derived the title of duke from that city. It was erected into a university.

by the pope and king of Spain.* This was the commencement of that vast influence they were speedily to acquire by the control of education. They began about the same time to scatter their missionaries over the East. This had been one of the great objects of their foundation. And when news was brought, that thousands of barbarians flocked to the preaching of Francis Xavier, that he had poured the waters of baptism on their heads, and raised the cross over the prostrate idols of the East, they had enough, if not to silence the envy of competitors, at least to secure the admiration of the Catholic world. Men saw in the Jesuits courage and self-devotion, learning and politeness; qualities the want of which had been the disgrace of monastic fraternities. They were formidable to the enemies of the church; and those who were her friends cared little for the jealousy of the secular clergy, or for the technical opposition of lawyers. The mischiefs and dangers that might attend the institution were too remote for popular alarm.

24. In the external history of protestant churches, two events, not long preceding the middle of the sixteenth century, served to compensate each other, — the unsuccessful league of the Lutheran princes of Germany, ending in their total defeat, and the establishment of the reformed religion in England by the council of Edward VI. It admits however of no doubt, that the principles of the Reformation were still progressive, not only in those countries where they were countenanced by the magistrate,

Council of
Trent.

* Fleury, Hist. Eccles. xxix. 221.

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but in others, like France and the Low Countries, where they incurred the risk of martyrdom. Meantime Paul III. had, with much reluctance, convoked a general council at Trent. This met on the 13th of December, 1545; and after determining a large proportion of the disputed problems in theology, especially such as related to grace and original sin, was removed by the pope in March, 1547, to his own city of Bologna, where they sat but a short time before events occurred which compelled them to suspend their sessions. They did not re-assemble till 1551.

Its chief
difficulties.

25. The greatest difficulties which embarrassed the council of Trent, appear to have arisen from the clashing doctrines of scholastic divines, especially the respective followers of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, embattled as rival hosts of Dominicans and Franciscans.* The fathers endeavoured, as far as possible, to avoid any decision which might give too unequivocal a victory to either; though it has generally been thought, that the former, having the authority of Augustin, as well as their own great champion, on their side, have come off, on the whole, superior in the decisions of the council.† But we must avoid these subtilties, [into which it is difficult not to slide when we touch on such topics.

* Fleury, xxix. 154. et alibi. F. Paul, lib. ii. and iii. passim.

† It is usual for protestant writers to inveigh against the Tridentine fathers. I do not assent to their decisions, which is not to the purpose, nor vindicate the in-

trigues of the papal party. But I must presume to say, that, reading their proceedings in the pages of that very able and not very lenient historian, to whom we have generally recourse, an adversary as decided as any that could have

26. In the history of the Reformation, Luther is incomparably the greatest name. We see him, in the skilful composition of Robertson, the chief figure of a group of gownsmen, standing in contrast on the canvass with the crowned rivals of France and Austria, and their attendant warriors, but blended in the unity of that historic picture. This amazing influence on the revolutions of his own age, and on the opinions of mankind, seems to have produced, as is not unnatural, an exaggerated notion of his intellectual greatness. It is admitted on all sides, that he wrote his own language with force and purity ; and he is reckoned one of its best models. The hymns in use with the Lutheran church, many of which are his own, possess a simple dignity and devoutness, never, probably, excelled in that class of poetry, and alike distinguished from the poverty of Sternhold or Brady, and from the meretricious ornament of later writers. But, from the Latin works of Luther few readers, I believe, will rise without disappointment. Their intemperance, their coarseness, their inelegance, their scurrility, their wild paradoxes, that menace the foundations of religious morality, are not compensated, so far at least as my slight acquaintance with them extends, by much strength or acuteness, and still less

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Character
of Luther.

come from the reformed churches, I find proofs of much ability, considering the embarrassments with which they had to struggle, and of an honest desire of reformation, among a large body, as to those matters which, in their judgment, ought to be reformed. The notes of Courayer on Sarpi's history,

though he is not much less of a protestant than his original, are more candid, and generally very judicious. Pallavicini I have not read ; but what is valuable in him will doubtless be found in the continuation of Fleury, vol. xxix. et alibi.

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by any impressive eloquence. Some of his treatises, and we may instance his reply to Henry VIII., or the book "against the falsely-named order of bishops," can be described as little else than bellowing in bad Latin. Neither of these books display, as far as I can judge, any striking ability. It is not to be imagined, that a man of his vivid parts fails to perceive an advantage in that close grappling, sentence by sentence, with an adversary, which fills most of his controversial writings; and in scornful irony he had no superior. His epistle to Erasmus, prefixed to the treatise *De servo arbitrio*, is bitterly insolent in terms as civil as he could use. But the clear and comprehensive line of argument, which enlightens the reader's understanding, and resolves his difficulties, is always wanting. An unbounded dogmatism, resting on an absolute confidence in the infallibility, practically speaking, of his own judgment, pervades his writings; no indulgence is shown, no pause allowed, to the hesitating; whatever stands in the way of his decisions, the fathers of the church, the schoolmen and philosophers, the canons and councils, are swept away in a current of impetuous declamation; and as every thing contained in Scripture, according to Luther, is easy to be understood, and can only be understood in his sense, every deviation from his doctrine incurs the anathema of perdition. Jerome, he says, far from being rightly canonised, must, but for some special grace, have been damned for his interpretation of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans.*

* *Infernum potius quam cœlum esse audeam dicere.* Vol. ii. fol. 478. Hieronymus meruit; tantum abest (Witt. 1554).
ut ipsum canonizare aut sanctum

That the Zwinglians, as well as the whole church of Rome, and the Anabaptists, were shut out by their tenets from salvation, is more than insinuated in numerous passages of Luther's writings. Yet he had passed himself through several changes of opinion. In 1518, he rejected auricular confession ; in 1520, it was both useful and necessary ; not long afterwards, it was again laid aside. I have found it impossible to reconcile, or to understand, his tenets concerning faith and works ; and can only perceive, that, if there be any reservation in favour of the latter, not merely sophistical, of which I am hardly well convinced, it consists in distinctions too subtle for the people to apprehend. These are not the oscillations of the balance in a calm understanding, conscious of the difficulty which so often attends the estimate of opposite presumptions, but alternate gusts of dogmatism, during which, for the time, he was as tenacious of his judgment as if it had been uniform.

27. It is not impossible, that some offence will be taken at this character of his works by those who have thought only of the man ; extraordinary as he doubtless was in himself, and far more so as the instrument of mighty changes on the earth. Many of late years, especially in Germany, without holding a single one of Luther's more peculiar tenets, have thought it necessary to magnify his intellectual gifts. Frederic Schlegel is among these ; but in his panegyric there seems a little wish to insinuate, that the reformer's powerful understanding had a taint of insanity. This has not unnaturally occurred to others, from the strange

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tales of diabolical visions Luther very seriously recounts, and from the inconsistencies as well as the extravagance of some passages. But the total absence of self-restraint, with the intoxicating effects of presumptuousness, is sufficient to account for aberrations, which men of regular minds construe into actual madness. Whether Luther were perfectly in earnest as to his personal [interviews with the devil, may be doubtful; one of them he seems to represent as internal.

Theological
writings.
Erasmus.

28. Very little of theological literature, published between 1520 and 1550, except such as bore immediately on the great controversies of the age, has obtained sufficient reputation to come within our researches, which, upon this most extensive portion of ancient libraries, do not extend to disturb the slumbers of forgotten folios. The paraphrase of Erasmus was the most distinguished work in scriptural interpretation. Though not satisfactory to the violent of either party, it obtained the remarkable honour of being adopted in the infancy of our own protestantism. Every parish church in England, by an order of council in 1547, was obliged to have a copy of this paraphrase. It is probable, or rather obviously certain, that this order was not complied with.*

Melanch-
thon.
Romish
writers.

29. The Loci Communes of Melanchthon have already been mentioned. The writings of Zwingli, collectively published in 1544, did not attain equal

* Jortin says that, "taking the Annotations and the Paraphrase of Erasmus together, we have an interpretation of the New Testament as judicious and exact as

could be made in his time, and to which very few deserve to be preferred of those which have since been published." ii. 91.

reputation ; with more of natural ability than erudition, he was left behind in the general advance of learning. Calvin stands on higher ground. His Institutes are still in the hands of that numerous body who are usually denominated from him. The works of less conspicuous advocates of the Reformation, which may fall within this earlier period of controversy, will not detain us ; nor is it worth while to do more on this occasion than mention the names of a few once celebrated men in the communion of Rome, Vives, Cajetan, Melchior Cano, Soto, and Catharin.* The two latter were prominent in the council of Trent, the first being of the Dominican party, or that of Thomas Aquinas, which was virtually that of Augustin ; the second a Scotist, and in some points deviating a little from what passed for the more orthodox tenets either in the catholic or protestant churches.†

30. These elder champions of a long war, especially the Romish, are, with a very few exceptions, known only by their names and lives. These are they, and many more there were down to the middle of the seventeenth century, at whom, along the shelves of an ancient library, we look and pass by. They belong no more to man, but to the worm, the moth, and the spider. Their dark and ribbed backs, their yellow leaves, their thousand folio pages, do not more repel us than the unprofitableness of their substance. Their prolixity, their barbarous style, the perpetual recurrence, in many, of syllogistic forms, the reliance, by way of proof, on au-

This literature nearly forgotten.

* Eichhorn, vi. 210—226. An- † Sarpi and Fleury, passim.
drès, xviii. 236.

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thorities that have been abjured, the temporary and partial disputes, which can be neither interesting nor always intelligible at present, must soon put an end to the activity of the most industrious scholar.* Even the coryphæi of the Reformation are probably more quoted than read, more praised than appreciated ; their works, though not scarce, are voluminous and expensive ; and it may not be invidious to surmise, that Luther and Melanchthon serve little other purpose, at least in England, than to give an occasional air of erudition to a theological paragraph, or to supply its margin with a reference that few readers will verify. It will be unnecessary to repeat this remark hereafter ; but it must be understood as applicable, with such few exceptions as will from time to time appear, throughout at least the remainder of the sixteenth century.

Sermons.

31. No English treatise on a theological subject, published before the end of 1550, seems to deserve notice in the general literature of Europe, though some may be reckoned interesting in the history of our Reformation. The sermons of Latimer, however, published in 1548, are read for their honest zeal and lively delineation of manners. They are probably the best specimens of a style then prevalent in the pulpit, and which is still not lost in Italy, nor among some of our own sectaries ; a style that came at once home to the vulgar, animated and effective, picturesque and intelligible, but too unsparing both of ludicrous associations and common-place invective. The French have some preachers, earlier than Latimer, whose great fame

* Eichhorn.

was obtained in this manner, Maillard and Menot. They belong to the reign of Louis XII. I am but slightly acquainted with the former, whose sermons, printed if not preached in Latin, with sometimes a sort of almost macaronic intermixture of French, appeared to me very much inferior to those of Latimer. Henry Stephens, in his *Apologie pour Herodote*, has culled many passages from these preachers, in proof of the depravity of morals in the age before the Reformation. In the little I have read of Maillard, I did not find many ridiculous, though some injudicious passages; but those who refer to the extracts of Niceron, both from him and Menot, will have as much gratification as consummate impropriety and bad taste can furnish.*

32. The vital spirit of the Reformation, as a great working in the public mind, will be inadequately discerned in the theological writings of this age. Two controversies overspread their pages, and almost efface more important and more obvious differences between the old and the new religions. Among the Lutherans, the tenet of justification or salvation by faith alone, called, in the barbarous jargon of polemics, solifidianism, was always prominent: it was from that point their founder began; it was there that, long afterwards, and when

Spirit of
the Re-
formation.

* Niceron, vols. xxiii. and xxiv. If these are the original sermons, it must have been the practice in France, as it was in Italy, to preach in Latin; but Eichhorn tells us that the sermons of the fifteenth century, published in Germany, were chiefly translated from the

mother tongue. vi. 113. Tauler certainly preached in German, yet Eichhorn in another place, iii. 282. seems to represent Luther and his protestant associates as the first who used that language in the pulpit.

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VI.**

its original crudeness had been mellowed, Melancthon himself thought the whole principle of the contest was grounded.* In the disputes again of the Lutherans with the Helvetic reformers, as well as in those of the latter school, including the church of England, with that of Rome, the corporal or real presence (which are synonymous with the writers of that century) in the Lord's supper was the leading topic of debate. But in the former of these doctrines, after it had been purged from the Antinomian extravagances of Luther, there was found, if not absolutely a verbal, yet rather a subtle, and by no means practical, difference between themselves and the church of Rome†; while, in the Eucharistic controversy, many of the reformers bewildered themselves, and strove to perplex their antagonists, with incompatible and unintelligible propositions, to which the mass of the people paid as little regard as they deserved. It was not for these trials of metaphysical acuteness that the ancient cathedrals shook in their inmost shrines; and though it would be very erroneous to deny, that many not merely of the learned laity, but of the inferior ranks, were apt to tread in such thorny paths, we must look to what came closer to the apprehension of plain men for their zeal in the cause of reformed religion, and for the success of that zeal. The abolition of saint-worship, the destruction of images, the sweeping away of ceremonies, of absolutions, of fasts and penances, the free circulation of the Scriptures,

* Melancth. Epist. p. 290. ed. Peucer, 1570.

† Burnet on eleventh article.

the communion in prayer by the native tongue, the introduction, if not of a good, yet of a more energetic and attractive style of preaching than had existed before ; and besides this, the eradication of monkery which they despised, the humiliation of ecclesiastical power which they hated, the immunity from exactions which they resented, these are what the north of Europe deemed its gain by the public establishment of the Reformation, and to which the common name of Protestantism was given. But it is rather in the history, than in the strictly theological literature of this period, that we are to seek for the character of that revolution in religious sentiment, which ought to interest us from its own importance, and from its analogy to other changes in human opinion.

33. It is often said, that the essential principle of protestantism, and that for which the struggle was made, was something different from all we have mentioned, a perpetual freedom from all authority in religious belief, or what goes by the name of the right of private judgment. But, to look more nearly at what occurred, this permanent independence was not much asserted and still less acted upon. The Reformation was a change of masters ; a voluntary one, no doubt, in those who had any choice ; and in this sense, an exercise, for the time, of their personal judgment. But no one having gone over to the confession of Augsburg, or that of Zurich, was deemed at liberty to modify those creeds at his pleasure. He might of course become an Anabaptist or an Arian ; but he was not the less a heretic in doing so, than if he

Limits of
private
judgment.

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had continued in the church of Rome. By what light a protestant was to steer, might be a problem which at that time, as ever since, it would perplex a theologian to decide ; but in practice, the law of the land, which established one exclusive mode of faith, was the only safe, as, in ordinary circumstances, it was, upon the whole, the most eligible guide.

Passions
instru-
mental in
Reform-
ation.

34. The adherents to the church of Rome have never failed to cast two reproaches on those who left them : one, that the reform was brought about by intemperate and calumnious abuse, by outrages of an excited populace, or by the tyranny of princes ; the other, that after stimulating the most ignorant to reject the authority of their church, it instantly withdrew this liberty of judgment, and devoted all who presumed to swerve from the line drawn by law, to virulent obloquy, or sometimes to bonds and death. These reproaches, it may be a shame for us to own, “ can be uttered, and cannot be refuted.” But, without extenuating what is morally wrong, it is permitted to observe, that the protestant religion could, in our human view of consequences, have been established by no other means. Those who act by calm reason are always so few in number, and often so undeterminate in purpose, that without the aid of passion and folly, no great revolution can be brought about. A persuasion of some entire falsehood, in which every circumstance converges to the same effect on the mind ; an exaggerated belief of good or evil disposition in others ; a universal inference peremptorily derived from some particular case ; these are what

sway mankind, not the simple truth with all its limits and explanations, the fair partition of praise and blame, or the measured assent to probability that excludes not hesitation. That condition of the heart and understanding which renders men cautious in their judgment, and scrupulous in their dealings, unfits them for revolutionary seasons. But of this temper there is never much in the public. The people love to be told that they can judge; but they are conscious that they can act. Whether a saint in sculpture ought to stand in the niches of their cathedrals, it was equally tedious and difficult to inquire; that he could be defaced, was certain; and this was achieved. It is easy to censure this as precipitancy; but it was not a mere act of the moment; it was, and much more was of the same kind, the share that fell naturally to the multitude in a work which they were called to fulfil, and for which they sometimes encountered no slight danger.

35. But if it were necessary, in the outset of the Reformation, to make use of that democratic spirit of destruction, by which the populace answered to the bidding of Carlostadt or of Knox, if the artizans of Germany and Switzerland were to be made arbiters of controversy, it was not desirable that this reign of religious anarchy should be more than temporary. Protestantism, whatever, from the generality of the word, it may since be considered, was a positive creed; more distinctly so in the Lutheran than in the Helvetic churches, but in each, after no great length of time, assuming a determinate and dogmatic character. Luther him-

Establish-
ment of
new dog-
matism.

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self, as has been already observed, built up before he pulled down ; but the confession of Augsburg was the first great step made in giving the discipline and subordination of regular government to the rebels against the ancient religion. In this, however, it was taken for granted, that their own differences of theological opinion were neither numerous nor inevitable : a common symbol of faith, from which no man could dissent without criminal neglect of the truth or blindness to it, seemed always possible, though never attained ; the pretensions of catholic infallibility were replaced by a not less uncompromising and intolerant dogmatism, availing itself, like the other, of the secular power, and arrogating to itself, like the other, the assistance of the Spirit of God. The mischiefs that have flowed from this early abandonment of the right of free inquiry are as evident as its inconsistency with the principles upon which the reformers had acted for themselves ; yet, without the confession of Augsburg and similar creeds, it may be doubtful whether the protestant churches would have possessed a sufficient unity to withstand their steady, veteran adversaries, either in the war of words, or in those more substantial conflicts to which they were exposed for the first century after the Reformation. The schism of the Lutheran and Helvetic protestants did injury enough to their cause ; a more multitudinous brood of sectaries would, in the temper of those times, have been such a disgrace as it could not have overcome. It is still very doubtful, whether the close phalanx of Rome can be opposed, in ages of

strong religious zeal, by any thing except established or at least confederate churches.

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Editions of
Scripture.

36. We may conclude this section with mentioning the principal editions of translations of Scripture published between 1520 and 1550. The Complutensian edition of the New Testament, suspended since the year 1514, when the printing was finished, became public in 1522. The Polyglott of the Old Testament, as has been before mentioned, had appeared in 1517. An edition of the Septuagint and of the Greek Testament was published at Strasburg by Cephalaëus in 1524 and 1526. The New Testament appeared at Haguenaw in 1521, and from the press of Colinæus at Paris in 1534; another at Venice in 1538. But these, which have become very scarce, were eclipsed in reputation by the labours of Robert Stephens, who printed three editions in 1546, 1549, and 1550; the two former of a small size, the last in folio. In this he consulted more manuscripts than any earlier editor had possessed; and his margin is a register of their various readings. It is therefore, though far from the most perfect, yet the first endeavour to establish the text on critical principles.

37. The translation of the Old and New Testament by Luther is more renowned for the purity of its German idiom, than for its adherence to the original text. Simon has charged him with ignorance of Hebrew; and when we consider how late he came to the study of either that or the Greek language, and the multiplicity of his employments, it may be believed that his knowledge of them

Translations of
Scripture.

CHAP.
VI.

English.

was far from extensive.* From this translation, however, and from the Latin Vulgate, the English one of Tyndale and Coverdale, published in 1535 or 1536, is avowedly taken. † Tyndale had printed his version of the New Testament in 1526. That of 1537, commonly called Matthews's Bible, from the name of the printer, though in substance the same as Tyndale's, was superintended by Rogers, the first martyr in the persecution of Mary, who appears to have had some skill in the original languages. The Bible of 1539, more usually called Cranmer's Bible, was certainly revised by comparison with the original. It is however questionable, whether there was either sufficient leisure, or adequate knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages, in the reign of Henry VIII., to consummate so arduous a task as the thorough censure of the Vulgate text.

In Italy
and Low
Countries.

38. Bruccioli of Venice published a translation of the Scriptures into Italian, which he professes to have formed upon the original text. ‡ It was retouched by Marmocchi, and printed as his own in 1538. Zaccarias, a Florentine monk, gave another version in 1542, taken chiefly from his two

* Simon, *Hist. Critique*, V. T. p. 432. *Andrès*, xix. 169. Eichhorn however says, that Luther's translation must astonish any impartial judge, who reflects on the lamentable deficiency of subsidiary means in that age. iii. 317. The Lutherans have always highly admired this work on account of its pure Germanism; it has been almost as ill spoken of among Calvinists as by the catholics themselves. *St. Aldegonde* says, it is

farther from the Hebrew than any one he knows; *ex qua manavit nostra, ex vitiosa Germanicâ facta vitiosior Belgico-Teutonica*. *Gerdes*, iii. 60.

† Tyndale's translation of the Pentateuch had been published in 1530. It has been much controverted of late years, whether he were acquainted or not with Hebrew.

‡ The truth of this assertion is denied by *Andrès*, xix. 188.

predecessors. The earlier translation of Malerbi passed through twelve editions in this century.* The Spanish New Testament by Francis de Enzina was printed at Antwerp in 1543, as the Pentateuch in the same language was by some Jews at Constantinople in 1547.† Olaus Petri, the chief ecclesiastical adviser of Gustavus Vasa, translated the Scriptures into Swedish, and Palladius into Danish, before the middle of the century. But in no language were so many editions of Scripture published as in that of Flanders or Holland; the dialects being still more slightly different, I believe, at that time than they are now. The old translation from the Vulgate, first printed at Delft in 1497, appeared several times before the Reformation from the presses of Antwerp and Amsterdam. A Flemish version of the New Testament from that of Luther came out at Antwerp in 1522, the very year of its publication at Wittenberg; and twelve times more in the next five years. It appears from the catalogue of Panzer, that the entire Bible was printed in the Flemish or Dutch lan-

* M'Crie's Reformation in Italy, p. 43.

† This translation, which could have been of little use, was printed in Hebrew characters, with the original, and with a version in modern Greek, but in the same characters. It was reprinted in 1553 by some Italian Jews, in the ordinary letter. This Spanish translation is of considerable antiquity, appearing by the language to be of the twelfth century; it was made for the use of the Spanish Jews, and preserved privately in their synagogues and schools. This is one out of several translations

of Scripture that were made in Spain during the middle ages; one of them, perhaps, by order of Alfonso X. Andrès, xix. 151. But in the sixteenth century, even before the alarm about the progress of heresy began in Spain, a stop was put to their promulgation, partly through the suspicions entertained of the half-converted Jews. Id. 183. The translation of Enzina, a suspected protestant, was of course not well received, and was nearly suppressed. Id. ibid. M'Crie's Hist. of the Reformation in Spain.

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guage, within the first thirty-six years of the sixteenth century, in fifteen editions, one of which was at Louvain, one at Amsterdam, and the rest at Antwerp. Thirty-four editions of the New Testament alone in that language appeared within the same period; twenty-four of them at Antwerp.* Most of these were taken from Luther, but some from the Vulgate. There can be no sort of comparison between the number of these editions, and consequently the eagerness of the people of the Low Countries for biblical knowledge, considering the limited extent of their language, and any thing that could be found in the protestant states of the empire.

Latin translations.

39. Notwithstanding the authority given to the Vulgate by the church of Rome, it has never been forbidden either to criticise the text of that version, or to publish a new one. Sanctes Pagninus, an oriental scholar of some reputation, published a translation of the Old and New Testament at Lyons in 1528. This has been reckoned too literal, and consequently obscure and full of solecisms. That of Sebastian Munster, a more eminent Hebraist, printed at Basle in 1534, though not free from oriental idioms, which indeed very few translations have been, or perhaps rightly can be, and influenced, according to some, by the false interpretations of the rabbins, is more intelligible. Two of the most learned and candid Romanists, Huet and Simon, give it a decided preference over the version of Pagninus. Another translation by Leo

* Panzer, *Annales Typographici*, Index.

Juda and Bibliander, at Zurich in 1543, though more elegant than that of Munster, deviates too much from the literal sense. This was reprinted at Paris in 1545 by Robert Stephens, with notes attributed to Vatable.*

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40. The earliest protestant translation in French is that by Olivetan at Neufchatel in 1535. It has been said that Calvin had some share in this edition; which, however, is of little value, except from its scarcity, if it be true that the text of the version from the Vulgate, by Faber Stapulensis, has been merely retouched. Faber had printed this, in successive portions, some time before; at first in France; but the parliament of Paris, in 1525, having prohibited his translation, he was compelled to have recourse to the press of Antwerp. This edition of Faber appeared several times during the present period. The French Bible of Louvain, which is that of Faber, revised by the command of Charles V., appeared as a new translation in 1550.†

* Simon, Hist. Crit. du V. T. Biogr. Univ. Eichhorn, v. 565. et post. Andrès, xix. 165.

† Idem.

CHAP. VII.

HISTORY OF SPECULATIVE, MORAL, AND POLITICAL
PHILOSOPHY, AND OF JURISPRUDENCE, IN EUROPE,
FROM 1520 TO 1550.

SECT. I. 1520—1550.

*Speculative Philosophy.*CHAP.
VII.

Logic in-
cluded
under this
head.

1. UNDER this head we shall comprehend not only what passes by the loose, yet not unintelligible, appellation metaphysics, but those theories upon the nature of things, which, resting chiefly upon assumed dogmas, could not justly be reduced to the division of physical science. The distinction may sometimes be open to cavil; but every man of a reflecting mind will acknowledge the impossibility of a rigorous classification of books. The science of logic, not only for the sake of avoiding too many partitions, but on account of its peculiar connection, in this period of literature, with speculative philosophy, will be comprised in the same department.

Slow defeat
of scho-
lastic phi-
losophy.

2. It might be supposed that the old scholastic philosophy, the barbarous and unprofitable disputations which occupied the universities of Europe for some hundred years, would not have

endured much longer against the contempt of a more enlightened generation. Wit and reason, learning and religion, combined their forces to overthrow the idols of the schools. They had no advocates able enough to say much in their favour; but established possession, and that inert force which ancient prejudices retain, even in a revolutionary age, especially when united with civil and ecclesiastical authority, rendered the victory of good sense and real philosophy very slow.

3. The defenders of scholastic disputation availed themselves of the common-place plea, that its abuses furnished no conclusion against its use. The barbarousness of its terminology might be in some measure discarded; the questions which had excited ridicule might be abandoned to their fate; but it was still contended that too much of theology was involved in the schemes of school philosophy erected by the great doctors of the church to be sacrificed for heathen or heretical innovations. The universities adhered to their established exercises; and though these, except in Spain, grew less active, and provoked less emulation, they at least prevented the introduction of any more liberal course of study. But the chief supporters of scholastic philosophy, which became, in reality or in show, more nearly allied to the genuine authority of Aristotle, than it could have been, while his writings were unknown or ill translated, were found, after the revival of letters, among the Dominican or Franciscan orders; to whom the Jesuits, inferior to none in acuteness, lent, in process of time, their own very powerful

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It is sustained by the universities and regulars.

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aid.* Spain was, above all countries, and that for a very long time, the asylum of the schoolmen ; and this seems to have been one among many causes, which have excluded, as we may say, the writers of that kingdom, with but few exceptions, from the catholic communion of European literature.

Comment-
ators on
Aristotle.

4. These men, or many of them, at least towards the middle of the century, were acquainted with the writings of Aristotle. But commenting upon the Greek text, they divided it into the smallest fragments, gave each a syllogistic form, and converted every proposition into a complex series of reasonings, till they ended, says Buhle, in an endless and insupportable verbosity. "In my own labours upon Aristotle," he proceeds, "I have sometimes had recourse, in a difficult passage, to these scholastic commentators, but never gained any thing else by my trouble than an unpleasant confusion of ideas ; the little there is of value being scattered and buried in a chaos of endless words."†

Attack of
Vives on
scholastics.

5. The scholastic method had the reformers both of religion and literature against it. One of the most strenuous of the later was Ludovicus Vives, in his great work, *De corruptis artibus et tradendis disciplinis*. Though the main object of this is the restoration of what were called the studies of humanity (*humaniores literæ*), which were ever found incompatible with the old metaphysics, he does not fail to lash the schoolmen directly in parts

* Brucker, iv. 117. et post. Buhle has drawn copiously from his predecessor, ii. 448.

† ii. 417.

of this long treatise, so that no one, according to Brucker, has seen better their weak points or struck them with more effect. Vives was a native of Valencia, and at one time preceptor to the princess Mary in England.*

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6. In the report of the visitation of Oxford, ordered by Henry VIII. in 1535, contempt for the scholastic philosophy is displayed in the triumphant tone of conquerors. Henry himself had been an admirer of Thomas Aquinas. But the recent breach with the see of Rome made it almost necessary to declare against the schoolmen, its steadiest adherents. And the lovers of ancient learning, as well as the favourers of the Reformation, were gaining ground in the English government.†

Contempt
of them in
England.

7. But while the subtle, though unprofitable, ingenuity of the Thomists and Scotists was giving way, the ancient philosophy, of which that of the scholastic doctors was a corruption, restored in its genuine lineaments, kept possession of the field with almost redoubled honour. What the doctors of the middle ages had been in theology, that was Aristotle in all physical and speculative science; and the church admitted him into an alliance of dependency for her own service. The Platonic philosophy, to which the patronage of the Medici and the writings of Ficinus had given countenance

Veneration
for Aris-
totle.

* Brucker, iv. 87. Meiners (Vergleich. der sitten, ii. 730—755.) has several extracts from Vives as to the scholasticism of the beginning of this century. He was placed by some of his contemporaries in a triumvirate with Erasmus and Budæus.

† Wood's Hist. of University of Oxford. The passage wherein Antony Wood deplores the "setting Duns in Bocardo" has been often quoted by those who make merry with the lamentations of ignorance.

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in the last century, was much fallen, nor had, at this particular time, any known supporters in Europe. Those who turned their minds to physical knowledge, while they found little to their purpose in Plato, were furnished by the rival school with many confident theories and some useful truth. Nor was Aristotle without adherents among the conspicuous cultivators of polite literature; who willingly paid that deference to a sage of Greece, they blushed to show for a barbarian dialectician of the thirteenth century. To them at least he was indebted for appearing in a purer text, and in more accurate versions; nor was the criticism of the sixteenth century more employed on any other writer. By the help of philology, as her bounden handmaid, philosophy trimmed afresh her lamp. The true peripatetic system, according to so competent a judge as Buhle, was first made known to the rest of Europe in the sixteenth century; and the new disciples of Aristotle, endeavouring to possess themselves of the spirit, as well as literal sense of his positions, prepared the way for a more advanced generation to poise their weight in the scale of reason.*

Melanch-
thon coun-
tenances
him.

8. The name of Aristotle was sovereign in the continental universities; and the union between his philosophy, or what bore that title, and the church, appeared so long established, that they must stand or fall together. Luther accordingly, in the commencement of the Reformation, inveighed against the Aristotelian logic and metaphy-

* Buhle, ii. 462.

sics, or rather against those sciences themselves; nor was Melanchthon at that time much behind him. But time ripened in this, as it did in theology, the disciple's excellent understanding; and he even obtained influence enough over the master to make him retract some of that invective against philosophy, which at first threatened to bear down all human reason. Melanchthon became a strenuous advocate of Aristotle, in opposition to all other ancient philosophy. He introduced into the university of Wittenberg, to which all protestant Germany looked up, a scheme of dialectics and physics, founded upon the peripatetic school, but improved, as Buhle tells us, by his own acuteness and knowledge. Thus in his books logic is taught with a constant reference to rhetoric; and the physical science of antiquity is enlarged by all that had been added in astronomy and physiology. It need hardly be said, that the authority of Scripture was always resorted to as controlling a philosophy, which had been considered unfavourable to natural religion.*

9. I will not contend, after a very cursory inspection of this work of Melanchthon, against the elaborate panegyric of Buhle; but I cannot think the *Initia Doctrinæ Physicæ* much calculated to advance the physical sciences. He insists very fully on the influence of the stars in producing events which we call fortuitous, and even in moulding the human character; a prejudice under which this eminent man is well known to have laboured.

His own
philosophical
treatises.

* Buhle, ii. 427.

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Melanchthon argues sometimes from the dogmas of Aristotle, sometimes from a literal interpretation of Scripture, so as to arrive at strange conclusions. Another treatise, entitled *De animâ*, which I have not seen, is extolled by Buhle as comprehending not only the psychology but the physiology also of man, and as having rendered great service in the age for which it was written. This universality of talents, and we have not yet adverted to the ethics and dialectics of Melanchthon, enhanced his high reputation; nor is it surprising, that the influence of so great a name should have secured the preponderance of the Aristotelian philosophy in the protestant schools of Germany for more than a century.

Aristote-
lians of
Italy.

10. The treatise of the most celebrated Aristotelian of his age, Pomponatius, on the immortality of the soul, has been already mentioned. In 1525 he published two books, one on incantations, the other on fate and free-will. They are extremely scarce, but, according to the analysis of Brucker, indicate a scheme of philosophy by no means friendly to religion.* I do not find any other of the Aristotelian school who falls within the present thirty years, of sufficient celebrity to deserve mention in this place. But the Italian Aristotelians were divided into two classes; one, to which Pomponatius belonged, following the interpretation of the ancient Greek scholiasts, especially Alexander of Aphrodisia; the other, that of the famous Spanish philosopher of the twelfth century, Averroes,

* Brucker, iv. 166.

who may rather be considered an heresiarch in the peripatetic church, than a genuine disciple of its founder. The leading tenet of Averrhoism was the numerical unity of the soul of mankind, notwithstanding its partition among millions of living individuals.* This proposition, which it may seem difficult to comprehend, and which Buhle deems a misapprehension of a passage in Aristotle, natural enough to one who read him in a bad Arabic version, is so far worthy of notice, that it contains the germ of an atheistical philosophy, which spread far, as we shall hereafter see, in the latter part of this century, and in the seventeenth.

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11. Meantime the most formidable opposition to the authority of Aristotle sprung up in the very centre of his dominions; a conspiracy against the sovereign in his court itself. For, as no university had been equal in renown for scholastic acuteness to that of Paris, there was none so tenacious of its ancient discipline. The very study of Greek and Hebrew was a dangerous innovation in the eyes of its rulers, which they sought to restrain by the intervention of the civil magistrate. Yet here, in their own schools, the ancient routine of dialectics was suddenly disturbed by an audacious hand.

University
of Paris.

12. Peter Ramus (Ramée) a man of great natural acuteness, an intrepid, though too arrogant a spirit, and a sincere love of truth, having acquired a considerable knowledge of languages as well as philosophy in the university, where he originally filled, it is said, a menial office in one of the col-

New logic
of Ramus.

* See Bayle, Averroes, note E, to which I omitted to refer on a former mention of the subject, p. 273.

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leges, began publicly to attack the Aristotelian method of logic, by endeavouring to substitute a new system of his own. He had been led to ask himself, he tells us, after three years passed in the study of logic, whether it had rendered him more conversant with facts, more fluent in speech, more quick in poetry, wiser, in short, any way than it had found him ; and being compelled to answer all this in the negative, he was put on considering, whether the fault were in himself, or in his course of study. Before he could be quite satisfied as to this question, he fell accidentally upon reading some dialogues of Plato ; in which, to his infinite satisfaction, he found a species of logic very unlike the Aristotelian, and far more apt, as it appeared, to the confirmation of truth. From the writings of Plato, and from his own ingenious mind, Ramus framed a scheme of dialectics, which immediately shook the citadel of the Stagyrte ; and, though in itself it did not replace the old philosophy, contributed very powerfully to its ultimate decline. The *Institutiones Dialecticæ* of Ramus were published in 1543.

It meets
with unfair
treatment.

13. In the first instance, however, he met with the strenuous opposition which awaits such innovators. The university laid their complaint before the parliament of Paris ; the king took it out of the hands of the parliament ; and a singular trial was awarded as to the merits of the rival systems of logic, two judges being nominated by Goveanus, the prominent accuser of Ramus, two by himself, and a fifth by the king. Francis, it seems, though favourable to the classical scholars, whose wishes

might generally go against the established dialectics, yet, perhaps from connecting this innovation with those in religion, took the side of the university; and after a regular hearing, though, as is alleged, a very partial one, the majority of the judges pronouncing an unfavourable decision, Ramus was prohibited from teaching, and his book was suppressed. This prohibition, however, was taken off a few years afterwards, and his popularity as a lecturer in rhetoric gave umbrage to the university. It was not till some time afterwards that his system spread over part of the continent.*

14. Ramus has been once mentioned by Lord Bacon, certainly no bigot to Aristotle, with much contempt, and another time with limited praise.† It is however generally admitted by critical historians of philosophy, that he conferred material obligations on science, by decrying the barbarous logic of the schoolmen. What are the merits of his own method, is a different question. It seems

Its merits
and cha-
racter.

* Launoy de variâ Aristot. fortuna in Acad. Paris. The sixth stage of Aristotle's fortune. Launoy reckons to be the Ramean controversy, and the victory of the Greek philosopher. He quotes a passage from Omer Talon, which show that the trial was conducted with much unfairness and violence, p. 112. See also Brucker, v. 548—583., for a copious account of Ramus; and Buhle, ii. 579—602.: also Bayle.

† Hooker also says with severe irony: "In the poverty of that other new-devised aid, two things there are notwithstanding singular. Of marvellous quick despatch it is, and doth show them that have it

as much almost in three days, as if it had dwelt threescore years with them," &c. Again: "Because the curiosity of man's wit doth many times with peril wade farther in the search of things, than were convenient, the same is thereby restrained into such generalities, as every where offering themselves, are apparent unto men of the weakest conceit that need be: so as following the rules and precepts thereof, we may find it to be an art, which teacheth the way of speedy discourse, and restraineth the mind of man, that it may not wax over-wise." Eccles. Pol. i. § 6.

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evidently to have been more popular and convenient than that in use. He treated logic as merely the art of arguing to others, *ars disserendi*; and, not unnaturally from this definition, comprehended in it much that the ancients had placed in the province of rhetoric, the invention and disposition of proofs in discourse.

Buhle's
account
of it.

15. "If we compare," says Buhle, "the logic of Ramus with that which was previously in use, it is impossible not to recognise its superiority. If we judge of it by comparison with the extent of the science itself and the degree of perfection it has attained in the hands of modern writers, we shall find but an imperfect and faulty attempt." Ramus neglected, he proceeds to say, the relation of the reason to other faculties of the mind, the sources of error, and the best means of obviating them, the precautions necessary in forming and examining our judgments. His rules display the pedantry of system as much as those of the Aristotelians.*

16. As the logic of Ramus appears to be of no more direct utility than that of Aristotle in assisting us to determine the absolute truth of propositions, and consequently could not satisfy Lord Bacon, so perhaps it does not interfere with the proper use of syllogisms, which indeed, on a less extended scale than in Aristotle, form part of the Ramean dialectics. Like all those who assailed the authority of Aristotle, he kept no bounds in depreciating his works; aware perhaps that the public, and especially younger students, will pass

* Buhle, ii. 593. 595.

more readily from admiration to contempt, than to a qualified estimation, of any famous man.

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Paracelsus.

17. While Ramus was assaulting the stronghold of Aristotelian despotism, the syllogistic method of argumentation, another province of that extensive empire, its physical theory, was invaded by a still more audacious, and we must add, a much more unworthy innovator, Theophrastus Paracelsus. Though few of this extraordinary person's writings were published before the middle of the century, yet as he died in 1541, and his disciples began very early to promulgate his theories, we may introduce his name more appropriately in this than in any later period. The system, if so it may be called, of Paracelsus had a primary regard to medicine, which he practised with the boldness of a wandering empiric. It was not unusual in Germany to carry on this profession; and Paracelsus employed his youth in casting nativities, practising chiromancy, and exhibiting chemical tricks. He knew very little Latin, and his writings are as unintelligible from their style as their substance. Yet he was not without acuteness in his own profession; and his knowledge of pharmaceutic chemistry was far beyond that of his age. Upon this real advantage he founded those extravagant theories, which attracted many ardent minds in the sixteenth century, and were afterwards woven into new schemes of fanciful philosophy. His own models were the oriental reveries of the Cabbala, and the theosophy of the mystics. He seized hold of a notion which easily seduces the imagination of those who do not ask for rational proof, that there

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is a constant analogy between the macrocosm, as they called it, of external nature, and the microcosm of man. This harmony and parallelism of all things, he maintains, can only be made known to us by Divine revelation; and hence all heathen philosophy has been erroneous. The key to the knowledge of nature is in the Scriptures only, studied by means of the Spirit of God communicating an interior light to the contemplative soul. So great an obscurity reigns over the writings of Paracelsus, which, in Latin at least, are not originally his own, for he had but a scanty acquaintance with that language, that it is difficult to pronounce upon his opinions, especially as he affects to use words in senses imposed by himself; the developement of his physical system consisted in an accumulation of chemical theorems, none of which are conformable to sound philosophy.*

His im-
postures.

18. A mixture of fanaticism and imposture is very palpable in Paracelsus, as in what he calls his Gabalistic art, which produces by imagination and natural faith, "*per fidem naturalem ingenitam*," all magical operations, and counterfeits by these means whatever we see in the external world. Man has a sidereal as well as material body, an astral element, which all do not partake in equal degrees; and therefore the power of magic, which is in fact the power of astral properties, or of producing

* Brucker, iv. 646—684., has copiously descanted on the theosophy of Paracelsus; and a still more enlarged account of it will be found in the third volume of Sprengel's *Geschichte der Arzney-*

kunste, which I use in the French translation. Buhle is very brief in this instance, though he has a general partiality to mystical rhapsodies.

those effects which the stars naturally produce, is not equally attainable by all. This actual element of the body survives for a time after death, and explains the apparition of dead persons; but in this state it is subject to those who possess the art of magic, which is then called necromancy.

And extra-
vagancies.

19. Paracelsus maintained the animation of every thing; all minerals both feed and render their food. And besides this life of every part of nature, it is peopled with spiritual beings, inhabitants of the four elements, subject to disease and death like man. These are the silvains (sylphs), undines, or nymphs, gnomes, and salamanders. It is thus observable that he first gave these names, which rendered afterwards the Rosicrucian fables so celebrated. These live with man, and sometimes, except the salamanders, bear children to him; they know future events, and reveal them to us; they are also guardians of hidden treasures, which may be obtained by their means.* I may perhaps have said too much about paradoxes so absurd and mendacious; but literature is a garden of weeds as well as flowers; and Paracelsus forms a link in the history of opinion, which should not be overlooked.

Cornelius
Agrippa.

20. The sixteenth century was fertile in men, like Paracelsus, full of arrogant pretensions, and eager to substitute their own dogmatism for that they endeavoured to overthrow. They are, compared with Aristotle, like the ephemeral demagogues who start up to a power they abuse as

* Sprengel, iii. 305.

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well as usurp on the overthrow of some ancient tyranny. One of these was Cornelius Agrippa, chiefly remembered by the legends of his magical skill. Agrippa had drunk deep at the turbid streams of cabbalistic philosophy, which had already intoxicated two men of far greater merit, and born for greater purposes, Picus of Mirandola and Reuchlin. The treatise of Agrippa on occult philosophy is a rhapsody of wild theory and juggling falsehood. It links, however, the theosophy of Paracelsus and the later sect of Behmenists with an oriental lore, venerable in some measure for its antiquity, and full of those aspirations of the soul to break her limits, and withdraw herself from the dominion of sense, which soothed, in old time, the reflecting hours of many a solitary sage on the Ganges and the Oxus. The Jewish doctors had borrowed much from this eastern source, and especially the leading principle of their Cabbala, the emanation of all finite being from the infinite. But this philosophy was in all its successive stages mingled with arbitrary, if not absurd, notions as to angelic and demoniacal intelligences, till it reached a climax in the sixteenth century.

His pretended philosophy.

21. Agrippa, evidently the precursor of Paracelsus, builds his pretended philosophy on the four elements, by whose varying forces the phænomena of the world are chiefly produced; yet not altogether, since there are occult forces of greater efficacy than the elementary, and which are derived from the soul of the world, and from the influence of the stars. The mundane spirit actuates every being, but in different degrees, and

gives life and form to each ; form being derived from the ideas which the Deity has empowered his intelligent ministers, as it were by the use of his seal, to impress. A scale of being, that fundamental theorem of the emanative philosophy, connects the higher and lower orders of things ; and hence arises the power of magic ; for all things have, by their concatenation, a sympathy with those above and below them, as sound is propagated along a string. But besides these natural relations, which the occult philosophy brings to light, it teaches us also how to propitiate and influence the intelligences, mundane, angelic, or demoniacal, which people the universe. This is best done by fumigations with ingredients corresponding to their respective properties. They may even, thus be subdued, and rendered subject to man. The demons are clothed with a material body, and attached to the different elements ; they always speak Hebrew, as the oldest tongue.* It would be trifling to give one moment's consideration to this gibberish, were it not evidently connected with superstitious absurdities, that enchained the mind of Europe for some generations. We see the credence in witchcraft and spectral appearances, in astrology and magical charms, in demoniacal possessions, those fruitful springs of infatuation, wretchedness, and crime, sustained by an impudent parade of metaphysical philosophy. The system of Agrippa is the mere creed of magical imposture, on which Paracelsus, and still more Jacob

* Brucker, iv. 410. Sprengel, iii. 226. Buhle, ii. 368.

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Behmen, grafted a sort of religious mysticism. But in their general influence these theories were still more pernicious than the technical pedantry of the schools. A Venetian monk, Francis Georgius, published a scheme of blended Cabbalistic and Platonic, or Neo-platonic, philosophy, in 1525; but having no collateral pretensions to fame, like some other worshippers of the same phantom, he can only be found in the historians of obsolete paradoxes.*

His sceptical treatise.

22. Agrippa has left, among other forgotten productions, a treatise on the uncertainty of the sciences, which served in some measure to promote a sceptical school of philosophy; no very unnatural result of such theories as he had proposed. It is directed against the imperfections sufficiently obvious in most departments of science, but contains nothing which has not been said more ably since that time. It is remarkable that he contradicts much that he had advanced in favour of the occult philosophy, and of the art of Raymond Lully.†

Cardan.

23. A man far superior to both Agrippa and Paracelsus was Jerome Cardan; his genius was quick, versatile, fertile, and almost profound; yet no man can read the strange book on his own life, wherein he describes, or pretends to describe, his extraordinary character, without suspecting a portion of insanity; a suspicion which the hypothesis of wilful falsehood would, considering what the book contains, rather augment than diminish.

* Brucker, iv. 374—386. Buhle, ii. 367.

† Brucker, Buhle.

Cardan's writings are extremely voluminous; the chief that relate to general philosophy are those entitled *De subtilitate et varietate rerum*. Brucker praises these for their vast erudition supported by innumerable experiments and observations on nature, which furnish no trifling collection of facts to readers of judgment; while his incoherence of ideas, his extravagance of fancy, and confused method have rendered him of little service to philosophy. Cardan professed himself a staunch enemy of Aristotle.*

SECT. II. 1520—1550.

On Moral and Political Philosophy.

24. By moral philosophy, we are to understand not only systems of ethics, and exhortations to virtue, but that survey of the nature or customs of mankind, which men of reflecting minds are apt to take, and by which they become qualified to guide and advise their fellows. The influence of such men, through the popularity of their writings, is not the same in all periods of society; it has sensibly abated in modern times, and is chiefly exer-

Influence
of moral
writers.

* Brucker, v. 85. Cardan had much of the same kind of superstition as Paracelsus and Agrippa. He admits as the basis of his physical philosophy a sympathy between the heavenly bodies and our own; not only general, but distributive; the sun being in harmony with the heart, the moon with the animal juices. All orga-

nised bodies he held to be animated, so that there is no principle which may not be called nature. All is ruled by the properties of numbers. Heat and moisture are the only real qualities in nature; the first being the formal, the second the material cause of all things. Sprengel, iii. 278.

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cised through fiction, or at least a more amusing style than was found sufficient for our forefathers; and from this change of fashion, as well as from the advance of real knowledge, and the greater precision of language, many books once famous have scarcely retained a place in our libraries, and never lie on our tables.

Cortegiano
of Casti-
glione.

25. In this class of literature, good writing, such at least as at the time appears to be good, has always been the condition of public esteem. They form a large portion of the classical prose in every language. And it is chiefly in this point of view that several of the most distinguished can deserve any mention at present. None was more renowned in Italy than the Cortegiano of Castiglione, whose first edition is in 1528. We here find both the gracefulness of the language in this, perhaps its best age, and the rules of polished life in an Italian court. These, indeed, are rather favourably represented, if we compare them with all we know of the state of manners from other sources; but it can be no reproach to the author that he raised the standard of honourable character above the level of practice. The precepts however are somewhat trivial, and the expression diffuse; faults not a little characteristic of his contemporaries. A book that is serious without depth of thought or warmth of feeling cannot be read through with pleasure.

26. At some distance below Castiglione in merit, and equally in reputation, we may place the dialogues of Sperone Speroni, a writer whose long life embraced two ages of Italian literature. These dialogues belong to the first, and were published in

1544. Such of them as relate to moral subjects, which he treats more theoretically than Castiglione, are solemn and dry; they contain good sense in good language; but the one has no originality, and the other no spirit.

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27. A Spanish prelate in the court of Charles obtained an extraordinary reputation in Europe by a treatise so utterly forgotten at present, that Bouterwek has even omitted his name. This was Guevara, author of *Marco Aurelio con el Relox de principes*, as the title-page awkwardly runs. It contains several feigned letters of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, which probably in a credulous age passed for genuine, and gave vogue to the book. It was continually reprinted in different languages for more than a century; scarce any book except the Bible, says Casaubon, has been so much translated, or so frequently printed.* It must be owned that Guevara is dull; but he wrote in the infancy of Spanish literature. The first part of this book is properly entitled *Marco Aurelio*, and is filled with the counterfeited letters; the second, *Relox de principes*, the Watch or Dial of Princes, is but a farrago of trite moral and religious reflections, with an intermixture of classical quotations. It is fair to observe, that Guevara seems uniformly a friend to good and just government, and that he probably employs Roman stories as a screen to his satire on the abuses of his time. Antonio and Bayle censure this as a

Marco Au-
relío of
Guevara.

* Bayle speaks of Guevara's less much declined before that *Marco Aurelio* with great contempt; its reputation had doubt-

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nosprecio
di corte.

literary forgery more severely than is quite reasonable. *Andrès* extols the style very highly.*

28. Guevara wrote better, or more pleasingly, in some other moral essays. One of them, *Menosprecio di corte y alabanza d'aldea*, indifferently translated into English by Thomas Tymme in 1575, contains some eloquent passages; and being dictated apparently by his own feelings, instead of the spirit of book-making, is far superior to the more renowned *Marco Aurelio*. Antonio blames Guevara for affectation of antithesis, and too studious desire to say every thing well. But this sententious and antithetical style of the Spanish writers is worthy of our attention; for it was imitated by their English admirers, and formed a style much in vogue in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. Thus, to take a very short specimen from Tymme's translation: "In the court," says Guevara, "it profits little to be wise, forasmuch as good service is soon forgotten, friends soon fail and enemies augment, the nobility doth forget itself, science is forgotten, humility despised, truth cloaked and hid, and good counsel refused." This elaborately condensed antithetical manner cannot have been borrowed from the Italians, of whom it is by no means a distinguishing feature.

Perez
d'Olive.

29. Bouterwek has taken notice of a moral writer contemporary with Guevara, though not so successful in his own age, Perez d'Olive. Of

* vii. 148. In 1541, Sir Thomas Elyot published "The image of government compiled of the acts and sentences of Alexander Severus," as the work of Encolpius, an imaginary secretary to that emperor.

Some have thought this genuine, or at least no forgery of Elyot's; but I see little reason to doubt that he imitated Guevara. Fabric. Bibl. Lat. and Herbert.

him, Andrès says, that the slight specimen he has left in his dialogue on the dignity of man, displays the elegance, politeness, and vigour of his style. It is written, says Bouterwek, in a natural and easy manner; the ideas are for the most part clearly and accurately developed, and the oratorical language, particularly where it is appropriately introduced, is powerful and picturesque.*

30. The writings of Erasmus are very much dedicated to the inculcation of Christian ethics. The *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, the *Lingua*, and, above all, the *Colloquies*, which have this primary object in view, may be distinguished from the rest. The *Colloquies* are, from their nature, the most sportive and amusing of his works; the language of Erasmus has no prudery, nor his moral code, though strict, any austerity; it is needless to add, that his piety has no superstition. The dialogue is short and pointed, the characters display themselves naturally, the ridicule falls, in general, with skill and delicacy; the moral is not forced, yet always in view; the manners of the age, in some of the colloquies, as in the *German Inn*, are humourously and agreeably represented. Erasmus, perhaps, in later times, would have been successful as a comic writer. The works of Vives breathe an equally pure spirit of morality. But it is unnecessary to specify works of this class, which, valuable as they are in their tendency, form too much the staple literature of every generation to be enumerated in its history. The treatise of Melanch-

Ethical
writings of
Erasmus
and Me-
lanchthon.

* Bouterwek, p. 309. Andrès, vii. 149.

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thon, *Moralis Philosophiæ Epitome*, stands on different grounds. It is a compendious system of ethics, built in great measure on that of Aristotle, but with such variation as the principles of Christianity, or his own judgment, led him to introduce. Hence, though he exhorts young students, as the result of his own long reflection on the subject, to embrace the Peripatetic theory of morals, in preference of those of the Stoic or Epicurean school*, and contends for the utility of moral philosophy, as part of the law of God, and the exposition of that of nature, he admits that the reason is too weak to discern the necessity of perfect obedience, or the sinfulness of natural appetite.† In this epitome, which is far from servilely following the Aristotelian dogmas, he declares wholly against

* Ego vero qui has sectarum controversias diu multumque agitavi, *ἀνω καὶ κάτω στρέφω*, ut Plato facere præcipit, valde adhortor adulescentulos, ut repudiatis Stoicis et Epicureis, amplectantur Peripatetica. Præfat. ad Mor. Philos. Epist. (1549).

† Id. p. 4. The following passage, taken nearly at random, may serve as a fair specimen of Melancthon's style :

Primum cum necesse sit legem Dei, item magistratuum leges nosse, ut disciplinam teneamus ad coercendas cupiditates, facile intelligi potest, hanc philosophiam etiam prodesse, quæ est quædam domestica disciplina, quæcum demonstrat fontes et causas virtutum, accendit animos ad earum amorem; abeunt enim studia in mores, atque hoc magis invitantur animi, quia quo propius aspicimus res bonas, eo

magis ipsas et admiramur et amamus. Hic autem perfecta notitia virtutis quæritur. Neque vero dubium est, quin, ut Plato ait, sapientia, si quod ejus simulacrum manifestum in oculos incurreret, acerrimos amores excitaret. Nulla autem fingi effigies potest, quæ propius exprimat virtutem et clarius ob oculos ponat spectantibus, quam hæc doctrina. Quare ejus tractatio magnam vim habet ad excitandos animos, ad amorem rerum honestarum, præsertim in bonis ac mediocribus ingeniis. p. 6.

He tacitly retracts in this treatise all he had said against free-will in the first edition of the *Loci Communes*; in hac quæstione moderatio adhibenda est, ne quas amplectamur opiniones immoderatas in utramque partem, quæ aut moribus officiant, aut beneficia Christi obscurant. p. 34.

usury, less wise in this than Calvin, and asserts the magistrate's right to punish heretics.

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31. Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governor*, published in 1531, though it might also find a place in the history of political philosophy, or of classical literature, seems best to fall under this head; education of youth being certainly no insignificant province of moral science. The author was a gentleman of good family, and had been employed by the king in several embassies. The *Biographia Britannica* pronounces him "an excellent grammarian, poet, rhetorician, philosopher, physician, cosmographer, and historian." For some part of this sweeping eulogy we have no evidence; but it is a high praise to have been one of our earliest English writers of worth, and though much inferior in genius to Sir Thomas More, equal perhaps in learning and sagacity to any scholar of the age of Henry VIII. The plan of Sir Thomas Elyot in his *Governor*, as laid down in his dedication to the king, is bold enough. It is "to describe in our vulgar tongue the form of a just public weal, which matter I have gathered as well of the sayings of most noble authors Greek and Latin, as by mine own experience, I being continually pained in some daily affairs of the public weal of this most noble realm almost from my childhood." But it is far from answering to this promise. After a few pages on the superiority of regal over every other government, he passes to the subject of education, not of a prince only, but any gentleman's son, with which he fills up the rest of his first book.

Sir T.
Elyot's
Governor.

32. This contains several things worthy of ob-

Severity of
education.

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servation. He advises that children be used to speak Latin from their infancy, and either learn Latin and Greek together, or begin with Greek. Elyot deprecates "cruel and *yrous* schoolmasters, by whom the wits of children be dulled, whereof we need no better author to witness, than daily experience." * All testimonies concur to this savage ill-treatment of boys in the schools of this period. The fierceness of the Tudor government, the religious intolerance, the polemical brutality, the rigorous justice, when justice it was, of our laws, seem to have engendered a hardness of character, which displayed itself in severity of discipline, when it did not even reach the point of arbitrary or malignant cruelty. Every one knows the behaviour of Lady Jane Grey's parents towards their accomplished and admirable child; the slave of their temper in her brief life, the victim of their ambition in death. The story told by Erasmus of Colet is also a little too trite for repetition. The general fact is indubitable; and I think we may ascribe much of the hypocrisy and disingenuousness, which became almost national characteristics in this and the first part of the next century, to the rigid scheme of domestic discipline so frequently adopted; though I will not say but that we owe some part of the firmness and power of self-command, which were equally manifest in the English character, to the same cause.

He seems
to avoid
politics.

33. Elyot dwells much and justly on the importance of elegant arts, such as music, drawing, and carving, by which he means sculpture, and of manly

* Chap. x.

exercises, in liberal education; and objects with reason to the usual practice of turning mere boys at fifteen to the study of the laws.* In the second book he seems to come back to his original subject, by proposing to consider what qualities a governor ought to possess. But this soon turns to long common-place ethics, copiously illustrated out of ancient history, but perhaps, in general, little more applicable to kings than to private men, at least those of superior station. It is plain that Elyot did not venture to handle the political part of his subject as he wished to do. He seems worthy, upon the whole, on account of the solidity of his reflections, to hold a higher place than Ascham, to whom, in some respects, he bears a good deal of resemblance.

34. Political philosophy was not yet a common theme with the writers of Europe, unless so far as the moral duties of princes may have been vaguely touched by Guevara or Elyot, or their faults strongly, but incidentally adverted to by Erasmus and More. One great luminary, however, appeared at this time, though, as he has been usually deemed, rather a sinister meteor, than a benignant star. It is easy to anticipate the name of Nicolas Machiavel. His writings are posthumous, and were first published at Rome early in 1532, with an approbation of the pope. It is certain, however, that the treatise called *The Prince* was written in 1513, and the *Discourses on Livy* about the same time.†

Nicolas
Machiavel.

* Chap. xiv.

† There are mutual references in each of these books to the other, from which Ginguéné has reason-

ably inferred that they were in progress at the same time. *Hist. Litt. de l'Italie*, viii. 46.

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Few are ignorant that Machiavel filled for nearly fifteen years the post of secretary to that government of Florence which was established between the expulsion of the Medici in 1494 and their return in 1512. This was in fact the remnant of the ancient oligarchy, which had yielded to the ability and popular influence of Cosmo and Lorenzo de' Medici. Machiavel, having served this party, over which the gonfalonier Pietro Soderini latterly presided, with great talents and activity, was naturally involved in their ruin ; and having undergone imprisonment and torture on a charge of conspiracy against the new government, was living in retired poverty when he set himself down to the composition of his two political treatises. The strange theories, that have been brought forward to account for The Prince of Machiavel, could never be revived after the publication of Ginguéné's history of Italian literature, and the article on Machiavel in the *Biographie Universelle*, if men had not sometimes a perverse pleasure in seeking refinements, after the simple truth has been laid before them.* His own language may assure us of what surely is not very improbable, that his object was to be employed in the service of Julian de' Medici, who was at the head of the state in Florence, almost in the situation of a prince, though without the title ; and that he wrote this treatise to recommend himself in his eyes. He had been faithful to the late

* Ginguéné has taken great pains with his account of Machiavel, and I do not know that there is a better. The *Biographie*

Universelle has a good anonymous article. Tiraboschi had treated the subject in a most slovenly manner.

powers ; but these powers were dissolved ; and in a republic, a dissolved government, itself the recent creature of force and accident, being destitute of the prejudice in favour of legitimacy, could have little chance of reviving again. It is probable, from the general tenor of Machiavel's writings, that he would rather have lived under a republic than under a prince ; but the choice was not left ; and it was better, in his judgment, to serve a master usefully for the state, than to waste his life in poverty and insignificance.

35. We may also in candour give Machiavel credit for sincerity in that animated exhortation to Julian which concludes the last chapter of *The Prince*, where he calls him forth to the noble enterprise of rescuing Italy from the barbarians. Twenty years that beautiful land had been the victim of foreign armies, before whom in succession every native state had been humiliated or overthrown. His acute mind easily perceived that no republican institutions would possess stability or concert enough to cast off this yoke. He formed therefore the idea of a prince ; one raised newly to power, for Italy furnished no hereditary line ; one sustained by a native army, for he deprecates the employment of mercenaries ; one loved, but feared also, by the many ; one to whom, in so magnanimous an undertaking as the liberation of Italy, all her cities would render a willing obedience. It might be, in part, a strain of flattery in which he points out to Julian of Medici a prospect so disproportionate, as we know historically, to his op-

His motives
in writing
The Prince.

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Some of
his rules not
immoral.

portunities and his character; yet it was one also perhaps of sanguine fancy and unfeigned hope.

36. None of the explanations assigned for the motives of Machiavel in *The Prince* is more groundless than one very early suggested, that by putting the house of Medici on schemes of tyranny, he was artfully luring them to their ruin. Whether this could be reckoned an excuse, may be left to the reader; but we may confidently affirm that it contradicts the whole tenor of that treatise. And, without palliating the worst passages, it may be said that few books have been more misrepresented. It is very far from true, that he advises a tyrannical administration of government, or one likely to excite general resistance, even to those whom he thought, or rather knew from experience, to be placed in the most difficult position for retaining power, by having recently been exalted to it. The Prince, he repeatedly says, must avoid all that will render him despicable or odious, especially injury to the property of citizens, or to their honour.* This will leave him nothing to guard against but the ambition of a few. Conspiracies, which are of little importance while the people are well affected, become unspeakably dangerous as soon as they are hostile.† Their love, therefore, or at least the absence of their hatred, is the basis of the governor's security, and far better than any fortresses.‡ A wise prince will honour the nobility, at the same time that he gives content to the people.§ If the

* c. xvii. and xix.

† c. xix.

‡ c. xx. la miglior fortezza che

sia è non essere odiato de' popoli.

§ c. xix.

observance of these maxims is likely to subvert a ruler's power, he may be presumed to have designed the ruin of the Medici. The first duke in the new dynasty of that house, Cosmo I., lived forty years in the practice of all Machiavel would have advised, for evil as well as good; and his reign was not insecure.

37. But much of a darker taint is found in The Prince. Good faith, justice, clemency, religion, should be ever in the mouth of the ideal ruler; but he must learn not to fear the discredit of any actions which he finds necessary to preserve his power.* In a new government, it is impossible to avoid the charge of cruelty; for new states are always exposed to dangers. Such cruelties perpetrated at the outset and from necessity, "if we may be permitted to speak well of what is evil," may be useful; though when they become habitual and unnecessary, they are incompatible with the continuance of this species of power.† It is best to be both loved and feared; but if a choice must be made, it should be of the latter. For men are naturally ungrateful, fickle, dissembling, cowardly, and will promise much to a benefactor, but desert him in his need, and will break the bonds of love much sooner than those of fear. But fear does not imply hatred; nor need a prince apprehend that, while he abstains from the properties and the wives of his subjects. Occasions to take the property of others never cease, while those of shedding blood are rare; and besides, a man will sooner forgive

But many dangerous.

* c. xvi. xviii.

† c. viii.

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VII.Its only
palliation.

the death of his father, than the loss of his inheritance.*

38. The eighteenth chapter, on the manner in which princes should observe faith, might pass for a satire on their usual violations of it, if the author did not too seriously manifest his approbation of them. The best palliation of this, and of what else has been justly censured in Machiavel, is to be derived from his life and times. These led him to consider every petty government as in a continual state of self-defence against treachery and violence, from its ill-affected citizens, as well as from its ambitious neighbours. It is very difficult to draw the straight line of natural right in such circumstances; and neither perhaps the cool reader of a remote age, nor the secure subject of a well-organised community, is altogether a fair arbiter of what has been done or counselled in days of peril and necessity; relatively, I mean, to the persons, not to the objective character of actions. There is certainly a steadiness of moral principle and Christian endurance, which tells us that it is better not to exist at all, than to exist at the price of virtue; but few indeed of the countrymen and contemporaries of Machiavel had any claim to the practice, whatever they might have to the profession, of such integrity. His crime, in the eyes of the world, and it was truly a crime, was to have cast away the veil of hypocrisy, the profession of a religious adherence to maxims which at the same moment were violated.†

* c. xvii.

† Morhof has observed that all the arts of tyranny which we read

in Machiavel, had been unfolded by Aristotle; and Ginguéné has shown this in some measure from

39. The Discourses of Machiavel upon the first books of Livy, though not more celebrated than The Prince, have been better esteemed. Far from being exempt from the same bias in favour of unscrupulous politics, they abound with similar maxims, especially in the third book ; but they contain more sound and deep thinking on the spirit of small republics, than could be found in any preceding writer that has descended to us ; more probably, in a practical sense, than the Politics of Aristotle, though they are not so comprehensive. In reasoning upon the Roman government, he is naturally sometimes misled by confidence in Livy ; but his own acquaintance with modern Italy was in some measure the corrective that secured him from the errors of ordinary antiquaries.

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His discourses on Livy.

40. These discourses are divided into three books, and contain 143 chapters with no great regard to arrangement ; written probably as reflections occasionally presented themselves to the author's mind. They are built upon one predominant idea ; that the political and military annals of early Rome having had their counterparts in a great variety of parallel instances which the recent history of Italy furnished, it is safe to draw experimental principles from them, and to expect the recurrence of similar consequences in the same

Their leading principles.

the eleventh chapter of the fifth book of the latter's Politics. He might also have quoted the Economics ; the second book, however, of which, full of the stratagems and

frauds of Dionysius, though nearly of his age, is not genuine. Mitford, with his usual partiality to tyrants, (chap. xxxi. sect. 8.), seems to think them all laudable.

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circumstances. This reasoning, founded upon a single repetition of the event, though it may easily mislead us, from an imperfect estimate of the conditions, and does not give a high probability to our anticipations, is such as those intrusted with the safety of commonwealths ought not to neglect. But Machiavel sprinkles these discourses with thoughts of a more general cast, and often applies a comprehensive knowledge of history, and a long experience of mankind.

41. Permanence, according to Machiavel, is the great aim of government.* In this very common sentiment among writers accustomed to republican forms, although experience of the mischiefs generally attending upon change might lead to it, there is, no doubt, a little of Machiavel's original taint, the reference of political ends to the benefit of the rulers rather than that of the community. But the polity which he seems for the most part to prefer, though he does not speak explicitly, nor always perhaps consistently, is one wherein the people should at least have great weight. In one passage he recommends, like Cicero and Tacitus, the triple form, which endeavours to conciliate the power of a prince with that of a nobility and a popular assembly; as the best means of preventing that cycle of revolutions through which, as he supposes, the simpler institutions would naturally, if not necessarily, pass; from monarchy to aristocracy, from that to democracy, and finally to monarchy again; though, as he observes, it rarely happens that there

* l. i. c. 2.

is time given to complete this cycle, which requires a long course of ages, the community itself, as an independent state, being generally destroyed before the close of the period.* But, with his prediction for a republican polity, he yet saw its essential weakness in difficult circumstances; and hence observes that there is no surer way to ruin a democracy than to set it on bold undertakings, which it is sure to misconduct.† He has made also the profound and important remark, that states are rarely either formed, or reformed, except by one man.‡

42. Few political treatises can even now be read with more advantage than the Discourses of Machiavel; and in proportion as the course of civil society tends farther towards democracy, and especially if it should lead to what seems the inevitable consequence of democracy, a considerable subdivision of independent states, they may acquire an additional value. The absence of all passion, the continual reference of every public measure to a distinct end, the disregard of vulgar associations with names or persons, render him, though too cold of heart for a very generous reader, a sagacious and useful monitor for any one who can employ the necessary methods of correcting his theorems. He formed a school of subtle reasoners upon political history, which, both in Italy and France, was in vogue for two centuries;

Their use
and influ-
ence.

* c. 2 and 6.

† c. 53.

‡ c. 9. Corniani, iv. 70., has attempted to reduce into system

the Discourses of Machiavel, which have no regular arrangement, so that nearly the same thoughts recur in different chapters.

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and, whatever might be its errors, has hardly been superseded for the better by the loose declamation that some dignify with the name of philosophical politics, and in which we continually find a more flagitious and undisguised abandonment of moral rules for the sake of some idol of a general principle, than can be imputed to *The Prince of Machiavel*.

His History
of Flo-
rence.

43. Besides these two works, the *History of Florence* is enough to immortalise the name of Nicolas Machiavel. Seldom has a more giant stride been made in any department of literature, than by this judicious, clear, and elegant history : for the preceding historical works, whether in Italy or out of it, had no claims to the praise of classical composition, while this has ranked among the greatest of that order. Machiavel was the first who gave at once a general and a luminous development of great events in their causes and connections, such as we find in the first book of his *History of Florence*. That view of the formation of European societies, both civil and ecclesiastical, on the ruins of the Roman empire, though it may seem now to contain only what is familiar, had never been attempted before, and is still, for its conciseness and truth, as good as any that can be read.

Treatises
on Venetian
govern-
ment.

44. The little treatises of Giannotti and Contarini on the republic of Venice, being chiefly descriptive of actual institutions, though the former, a Florentine by birth, sometimes reasons upon and even censures them, would not deserve notice, except as they display an attention to the workings of a most complicated, and at the same time a most

successful machine. The wonderful permanency, tranquillity, and prosperity of Venice became the admiration of Europe, and especially, as was most natural, of Italy; where she stood alone, without internal usurpation or foreign interference, strong in wisdom more than in arms, the survivor of many lines of petty princes, and many revolutions of turbulent democracy, which had, on either side of the Apennine, run their race of guilt and sorrow for several preceding centuries.*

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45. Calvin alone, of the reformers in this period, has touched upon political government as a theme of rational discussion; though he admits that it is needless to dispute which is the best form of polity, since private men have not the right of altering that under which they live. The change from monarchy to despotism, he says, is easy; nor is that from aristocracy to the dominion of a few much more difficult; but nothing is so apt to follow as sedition from a popular regimen. But upon the whole he considers an aristocratic form to be far better than the other two, on account of the vices and infirmity of human nature.†

Calvin's
political
principles.

* These are both published in Grævius, *Thesaur. Antiq. Italicæ*. See too Ginguéné, viii. 186.

† Calv. *Inst.* l. iv. c. 20. § 8.

SECT. III. 1501—1510.

*Jurisprudence.*CHAP.
VII.

Juris-
prudence
confined to
Roman
law.

46. UNDER the name jurisprudence, we are not yet to seek for writings on that high department of moral philosophy, which treats of the rules of universal justice, by which positive legislation and the courts of judicature ought to be directed. Whatever of this kind may appear in works of this period, arises incidentally out of their subject, and does not constitute their essence. According to the primary and established sense of the word, especially on the Continent, jurisprudence is the science of the Roman law, and is seldom applied to any other positive system, but least of all to the law of nature. Yet the application of this study has been too extensive in Europe, and the renown of its chief writers too high, to admit of our passing wholly over this department of literature, as we do some technical and professional subjects.

The laws
not well
arranged.

47. The civil or Roman law is comprehended in four leading divisions (besides some later than the time of Justinian), very unequal in length, but altogether forming that multifarious collection usually styled the *Corpus Juris Civilis*. As this has sometimes been published in a single, though a vast and closely printed volume, it may seem extraordinary, that by means of arranged indexes, marginal references, and similar resources, it was not, soon after it came into use as a standard authority, or, at least, soon after the invention of

printing, reduced into a less disorderly state than its present disposition exhibits. But the labours of the older jurists, in accumulating glosses or short marginal interpretations, were more calculated to multiply than to disentangle the intricacies of the Pandects.

48. It is at first sight more wonderful, that many nations of Europe, instead of selecting the most valuable portion of the civil law, as directory to their own tribunals, should have bestowed decisive authority on that entire unwieldy body which bore the name of Justinian; laws, which they could not understand, and which, in great measure, must, if understood, have been perceived to clash with the new order of human society. But the homage paid to the Roman name, the previous reception of the Theodosian code in the same countries, the vague notion of the Italians, artfully encouraged by one party, that the Conrads and Frederics were really successors of the Theodosii and Justinians, the frequent clearness, acuteness, and reasonableness of the decisions of the old lawyers which fill the Pandects, the immense difficulty of separating the less useful portion, and of obtaining public authority for a new system, the deference, above all, to great names, which cramped every effort of the human mind in the middle ages, will sufficiently account for the adoption of a jurisprudence so complicated, uncertain, unintelligible, and ill-fitted to the times.

Adoption
of the entire
system.

49. The portentous ignorance of the earlier jurists in every thing that could aid their textual explanations has been noticed in the first chapter

Utility of
general
learning
to lawyers.

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of this volume. This could not hold out long after the revival of learning. Budæus, in his *Observations on the Pandects*, was the first to furnish better verbal interpretations; but his philological erudition was not sustained by that knowledge of the laws themselves which nothing but long labour could impart.* Such a knowledge of the Latin language as even after the revival of letters was given in the schools, or, we may add, as is now obtained by those who are counted learned among us, serves but little towards the understanding those Roman lawyers, whose short decisions, or, as we should call them, opinions, occupy the fifty books of the *Pandects*. They had not only a technical terminology, as is perhaps necessary in professional usage, but many words and phrases not merely technical occur, as to the names and notions of things, which the classical authors, especially such as are commonly read, do not contain. Yet these writers of antiquity, when diligently pursued, throw much light upon jurisprudence; they assist conjecture, if they do not afford proof, as to the meaning of words; they explain allusions, they connect the laws with their temporary causes or general principles; and if they seem a little to lead us astray from the great object of jurisprudence, the adjudication of right, it was still highly important, in the conditions that Europe had imposed upon herself, to ascertain what it was that she had chosen to obey.

Alciati;
his reform
of law.

50. Ulric Zasius, a professor at Friburg, and

* Gravina, *Origines Jur. Civ.* p. 211.

Garcia d' Erzilla, whose commentaries were printed in 1515, should have the credit, according to Andrès, of leading the way to a more elegant jurisprudence.* The former of these is known, in some measure, as a scholar and a correspondent of Erasmus; for the latter I have to depend on the testimony of his countryman. But the general voice of Europe has always named Andrew Alciati of Milan as the restorer of the Roman law. He taught, from the year 1518 to his death in 1550, in the universities of Avignon, Milan, Bourges, Paris, and Bologna. Literature became with him the handmaid of law; the historians of Rome, her antiquaries, her orators and poets, were called upon to elucidate the obsolete words and obscure allusions of the Pandects; to which, the earlier as well as the most valuable and extensive portion of the civil law, this method of classical interpretation is chiefly applicable. Alciati had another advantage, denied to his predecessors of the middle ages, in the possession of the Byzantine jurists, with whom, says Gravina, the learning of Roman law had been preserved in a more perfect state amidst other vestiges of the empire, and while almost extinguished in Italy by the barbarians, had been in daily usage at Constantinople down to its capture. Alciati was the first who taught the lawyers to

* Andrès, xvi. 143. Savigny agrees with Andrès as to the merits of Zasius, and observes that the revival of the study of the laws in their original sources, instead of the commentators, had been announced by several signs before

the sixteenth century. Ambrogio Traversari had recommended this, and Lebrix wrote against the errors of Accursius, though in a superficial manner. *Gesch. des Römischen Rechts*, vi. 364.

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write with purity and elegance. Erasmus has applied to him the eulogy of Cicero on Scævola, that he was the most jurisprudent of orators, and the most eloquent of lawyers. But he deserved also the higher praise of sweeping away the rubbish of conflicting glosses, which had so confounded the students by their contrary subtilties, that it had become a practice to count, instead of weighing, their authorities. It has been regretted that he made little use of philosophy in the exposition of law; but this could not have been attempted in the sixteenth century without the utmost danger of misleading the interpreter.*

Opposition
to him.

51. The practical lawyers, whose prejudices were nourished by their interests, conspired with the professors of the old school to clamour against the introduction of literature into jurisprudence. Alciati was driven sometimes from one university to another by their opposition; but more frequently his restless disposition and his notorious desire of gain were the causes of his migrations. They were the means of diffusing a more liberal course of studies in France as well as Italy, and especially in the great legal university of Bourges. He stood not however alone in scattering the flowers of polite literature over the thorny brakes of jurisprudence. An eminent Spaniard, Antonio Agustino, might perhaps be placed almost on a level with him. The first work of Agustino, *Emendationes Juris Civilis*, was published in 1544. Andrès, seldom deficient in praising his compa-

Agustino.

* Bayle, art. Alciati. Gravina, p. 206. Tiraboschi, ix. 115. Corniani, v. 57.

tricts, pronounces such an eulogy on the writings of Agustino, as to find no one but Cujacius worthy of being accounted his equal, if indeed he does not give the preference in genius and learning to the older writer.* Gravina is less diffusely panegyric; and in fact it is certain that Agustino, though a lawyer of great erudition and intelligence, has been eclipsed by those for whom he prepared the way.

* Vol. xvi. p. 148.

CHAP. VIII.

HISTORY OF THE LITERATURE OF TASTE IN EUROPE
FROM 1520 TO 1550.

SECT. I. 1520—1550.

*Poetry in Italy — In Spain and Portugal — In France and Germany —
In England — Wyatt and Surrey — Latin Poetry.*

CHAP.
VIII.

Poetry of
Bembo.

1. **T**HE singular grace of Ariosto's poem had not less distinguished it than his fertility of invention and brilliancy of language. For the Italian poetry, since the days of Petrarch, with the exception of Lorenzo and Politian, the boasts of Florence, had been very deficient in elegance; the sonnets and odes of the fifteenth century, even those written near its close, by Tibaldeo, Serafino d' Aquila, Benivieni, and other now obscure names, though the list of poets in Crescimbeni will be found very long, are hardly mentioned by the generality of critics but for the purpose of censure; while Boiardo, who deserved most praise for bold and happy inventions, lost much of it through an unpolished and inharmonious style. In the succeeding period, the faults of the Italian school were entirely opposite; in Bembo, and those who, by

their studious and servile imitation of one great master, were called Petrarchists, there was an elaborate sweetness, a fastidious delicacy, a harmony of sound, which frequently served as an excuse for coldness of imagination and poverty of thought. "As the too careful imitation of Cicero," says Tiraboschi, "caused Bembo to fall into an affected elegance in his Latin style, so in his Italian poetry, while he labours to restore the manner of Petrarch, he displays more of art than of natural genius. Yet by banishing the rudeness of former poetry, and pointing out the right path, he was of no small advantage to those who knew how to imitate his excellencies and avoid his faults." *

2. The chief care of Bembo was to avoid the unpolished lines which deformed the poetry of the fifteenth century in the eyes of one so exquisitely sensible to the charms of diction. It is from him that the historians of Italian literature date the revival of the Petrarchan elegance; of which a foreigner, unless conversant with the language in all its varieties, can hardly judge, though he may perceive the want of original conception, and the monotony of conventional phrases, which is too frequently characteristic of the Italian sonnet. Yet the sonnets of Bembo on the death of his Morosina, the mother of his children, display a real tenderness not unworthy of his master; and the canzone on that of his brother has obtained not less renown; though Tassoni, a very fastidious critic, has ridiculed its centonism, or studious incorporation

Its beauties
and defects.

* Vol. x. p. 3.

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of lines from Petrarch; a practice which the habit of writing Latin poetry, wherein it should be sparingly employed, but not wholly avoided, would naturally encourage.*

Character
of Italian
poetry.

3. The number of versifiers whom Italy produced in the sixteenth century was immensely great. Crescimbeni gives a list of eighty earlier than 1550, whom he selects from many hundred ever forgotten names. By far the larger proportion of these confined themselves to the sonnet and the canzone or ode; and the theme is generally love, though they sometimes change it to religion. A conventional phraseology, an interminable repetition of the beauties and coldness of perhaps an ideal, certainly to us an unknown mistress, run through these productions; which so much resemble each other, as sometimes to suggest to any one who reads the *Sceltas* which bring together many extracts from these poets, no other parallel than that of the hooting of owls in concert; a sound melancholy and not displeasing to all ears in its way, but monotonous, unintellectual, and manifesting as little real sorrow or sentiment in the bird as these compositions do in the poet.†

Alamanni.

4. A few exceptions may certainly be made. Alamanni, though the sonnet is not his peculiar line of strength, and though he often follows the track of Petrarch with almost servile imitation,

* Tiraboschi, *ibid.* Corniani, iv. 102.

† Muratori himself observes the tantalising habit in which sonnet-teers indulge themselves, of threatening to die for love, which never

comes to any thing; *quella volgare smania che mostrano gl' amanti di voler morire, e che tante volte s'ode in bocca loro, ma non mai viene ad effetto.*

could not, with his powerful genius, but raise himself above the common level. His *Lygura Pianta*, a Genoese lady, the heroine of many sonnets, is the shadow of Laura; but when he turns to the calamities of Italy and his own, that stern sound is heard again, that almost reminds us of Dante and Alfieri. The Italian critics, to whom we must of course implicitly defer as to the grace and taste of their own writers, speak well of Molza, and some other of the smaller poets; though they are seldom exempt from the general defects above mentioned. But none does Crescimbeni so much extol, as a poetess, in every respect the most eminent of her sex in Italy, the widow of the Marquis of Pescara, Vittoria Colonna, surnamed, he says, by the public voice, the divine. The rare virtues and consummate talents of this lady were the theme of all Italy, in that brilliant age of her literature; and her name is familiar to the ordinary reader at this day. The canzone dedicated to the memory of her illustrious husband is worthy of both.*

Vittoria
Colonna.

5. The satires of Ariosto, seven in number, and composed in the Horatian manner, were published after his death in 1534. Tiraboschi places them at the head of that class of poetry. The reader will find an analysis of these satires, with some extracts, in Ginguéné.† The twelve satires of Ala-

Satires of
Ariosto and
Alamanni.

* Crescimbeni della volgar poesia, vols. ii. and iii. For the character of Vittoria Colonna, see ii. 360. Roscoe (Leo X. iii. 314.) thinks her canzone on her husband in no respect inferior to that of Bembo on his brother. It is rather by a stretch of chronology, that this writer reckons Vittoria, Berni,

and several more, among the poets of Leo's age.

† ix. 100—129. Corniani, iv. 55. In one passage of the second satire Ariosto assumes a tone of higher dignity than Horace ever ventured, and inveighs against the Italian courts in the spirit of his rival Alamanni.

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VIII.

manni, one of the Florentine exiles, of which the first edition is dated in 1532, though of earlier publication than those of Ariosto, indicate an acquaintance with them. They are to one another as Horace and Juvenal, and as their fortunes might lead us to expect; one gay, easy, full of the best form of Epicurean philosophy, cheerfulness, and content in the simpler enjoyments of life; the other ardent, scornful, unsparing, declamatory, a hater of vice, and no great lover of mankind, pouring forth his moral wrath in no feeble strain. We have seen in another place his animadversions on the court of Rome; nor does any thing in Italy escape his resentment.* The other poems of Alamanni are of a very miscellaneous description; eclogues, little else than close imitations of Theocritus and Virgil, elegies, odes, hymns, psalms, fables, tragedies, and what were called *selve*, a name for all unclassed poetry.

Alamanni.

6. Alamanni's epic, or rather romantic poem, the *Avarchide*, is admitted by all critics to be a work of old age, little worthy of his name. But his

* The following lines, which conclude the twelfth and last satire, may serve as a specimen of Alamanni's declamatory tone of invective, and his bitter attacks on Rome, whom he is addressing.

O chi vedesse il ver, vedrebbe come

Più disnor tu, che 'l tuo Luther
Martino

Porti a te stessa, e più gravose
some;

Non la Germania, nò, ma
l'ocio, il vino,

Avarizia, ambition, lussuria e
gola,

Ti mena al fin, che già veggiam
vicino.

Non pur questo dico io,
non Francia sola,
Non pur la Spagna, tutta Italia
ancora

Che ti tien d' heresia, di vizi
scuola.

E che nol crede, ne dimandi
ogn' ora

Urbino, Ferrara, l' Orso, e la
Colonna,

La Marca, il Romagnuol, ma
più che plora

Per te servendo, che fù
d'altri donna.

poem on agriculture, *la Coltivazione*, has been highly extolled. A certain degree of languor seems generally to hang on Italian blank verse; and in didactic poetry it is not likely to be overcome.

The *Bees* of Rucellai is a poem written with exquisite sweetness of style; but the critics have sometimes forgotten to mention, that it is little else than a free translation from the fourth *Georgic*.*

Rucellai.

No one has ever pretended to rescue from the charge of dulness and insipidity the epic poem of the father of blank verse, Trissino, on the liberation of Italy from the Goths by Belisarius. It is, of all long poems that are remembered at all, the most unfortunate in its reputation.

Trissino.

7. A very different name is that of Berni, partly known by his ludicrous poetry, which has given that style the appellation of *Poesia Bernesca*, rather on account of his excellence than originality, for nothing is so congenial to the Italians†, but far more by his *ri-faccimento*, or re-moulding of the poem of Boiardo. The *Orlando Innamorato*, an ill-written poem, especially to Tuscan ears, had been encumbered by the heavy continuation of Agostini. Yet if its own intrinsic beauties of invention would not have secured it from oblivion, the vast success of the *Orlando Furioso*, itself only a continuation, and borrowing most of its characters from Boiardo's poem, must have made it impossible for Italians of any curiosity to neglect the primary source of so much delight. Berni,

Berni.

* Roscoe's *Leo*, iii. 351. Tiraboschi, x. 85. Algarotti, and Corniani (v. 116.), who quotes him, do not esteem the poem of Rucellai highly.

† Corniani, iv. 252. Roscoe, iii. 323.

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therefore, undertook the singular office of writing over again the *Orlando Innamorato*, preserving the sense of almost every stanza, though every stanza was more or less altered, and inserting nothing but a few introductory passages, in the manner of Ariosto, to each canto.* The genius of Berni, playful, satirical, flexible, was admirably fitted to perform this labour; the rude Lombardisms of the lower Po gave way to the racy idiom of Florence; and the *Orlando Innamorato* has descended to posterity as the work of two minds, remarkably combined in this instance; the sole praise of invention, circumstance, description, and very frequently that of poetical figure and sentiment, belonging to Boiardo; that of style, in the peculiar and limited use of the word, to Berni. The character of the poem, as thus adorned, has sometimes been misconceived. Though Berni is almost always sprightly, he is not, in this romance, a burlesque or buffoon poet.† I once heard Foscolo prefer him to Ariosto.

* The first edition of the *Ri-faccimento* is in 1541, and the second in 1542. In that of 1545, the first eighty-two stanzas are very different from those that correspond in former editions; some that follow are suspected not to be genuine. It seems that we have no edition on which we can wholly depend. No edition of Berni appeared from 1545 to 1725, though Domenichi was printed several times. This reformer of Boiardo did not alter the text nearly so much as Berni. Panizzi, vol. ii.

† Tiraboschi, vii. 195., censures Berni for "motti e racconti troppo liberi ed empî, che vi ha inseriti." Ginguéné exclaims, as well he may,

against this imputation. Berni has inserted no stories; and unless it were the few stanzas that remain at the head of the twentieth canto, it is hard to say what Tiraboschi meant by impieties. But though Tiraboschi must have read Berni, he has here chosen to copy Zeno, who talks of "il poema di Boiardo, rifatto dal Berni, e di serio trasformato in ridicolo, e di onesto in scandoloso, e però giustamente dannato dalla chiesa." (Fontanini, p. 273.) Zeno, even more surely than Tiraboschi, was perfectly acquainted with Berni's poem: how could he give so false a character of it? Did he copy some older writer? and why? It seems hard

A foreigner, not so familiar with the peculiarities of language, would probably think his style less brilliant and less pellucid; and it is in execution alone that he claims to be considered as an original poet. The Orlando Innamorato was also remoulded by Domenichi in 1545; but the excellence of Berni has caused this feeble production to be nearly passed over by the Italian critics.*

8. Spain now began to experience one of those revolutions in fashionable taste, which await the political changes of nations. Her native poetry, whether Castilian or Valencian, had characteristics

Spanish
poets.

not to think that some suspicion of Berni's bias towards protestantism had engendered a prejudice against his poem, which remained when the cause had been forgotten, as it certainly was in the days of Zeno and Tiraboschi.

* "The ingenuity," says Mr. Pannizzi, "with which Berni finds a resemblance between distant objects, and the rapidity with which he suddenly connects the most remote ideas; the solemn manner in which he either alludes to ludicrous events or utters an absurdity; the air of innocence and naïveté with which he presents remarks full of shrewdness and knowledge of the world; that peculiar bonhomie with which he seems to look kindly and at the same time unwillingly on human errors or wickedness; the keen irony which he uses with so much appearance of simplicity and aversion to bitterness; the seeming singleness of heart with which he appears anxious to excuse men and actions, at the very moment that he is most inveterate in exposing them; these are the chief elements of Berni's poetry.

Add to this the style, the loftiness of the verse contrasting with the frivolity of the argument, the gravest conception expressed in the most homely manner; the seasonable use of strange metaphors and of similes sometimes sublime, and for this very reason the more laughable, when considered with relation to the subject which they are intended to illustrate, form the most remarkable features of his style." p. 120.

"Any candid Italian scholar who will peruse the *Rifacimento* of Berni with attention will be compelled to admit that, although many parts of the poem of Boiardo have been improved in that work, such has not always been the case; and will moreover be convinced that some parts of the *Rifacimento*, besides those suspected in former times, are evidently either not written by Berni, or have not received from him, if they be his, such corrections as to be worthy of their author." p. 141. Mr. P. shows in several passages his grounds for this suspicion.

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Boscan.
Garcilasso.

of its own, that placed it in a different region from the Italian. The short heroic, amatory, or devotional songs, which the Peninsular dialects were accustomed to exhibit, were too ardent, too hyperbolic for a taste which, if not correctly classical, was at least studious of a grace not easily compatible with extravagance. But the continual intercourse of the Spaniards with Italy, partly subject to their sovereign, and the scene of his wars, accustomed their nobles to relish the charms of a sister language, less energetic, but more polished than their own. Two poets, Boscan and Garcilasso de la Vega, brought from Italy the softer beauties of amorous poetry, embodied in the regular sonnet, which had hitherto been little employed in the Peninsula. These poems seem not to have been printed till 1543, when both Boscan and Garcilasso were dead, and their new school had already met with both support and opposition at the court of Valladolid. The national character is not entirely lost in these poets; love still speaks with more impetuous ardour, with more plaintive sorrow, than in the contemporary Italians; but the restraints of taste and reason are perceived to control his voice. An eclogue of Garcilasso, called *Salicio* and *Nemoroso*, is pronounced by the Spanish critics to be one of the finest works in their language. It is sadder than the lament of saddest nightingales. We judge of all such poetry differently in the progressive ages of life.

Mendoza.

9. Diego Mendoza, one of the most remarkable men for variety of talents whom Spain has produced, ranks with Boscan and Garcilasso as a

reformer of Castilian poetry. His character as a soldier, as the severe governor of Siena, as the haughty minister of Charles at the court of Rome and the council at Trent, is notorious in history.* His epistles, in an Horatian style, full of a masculine and elevated philosophy, though deficient in harmony and polish, are preferred to his sonnets; a species of composition where these faults are more perceptible; and for which, at least in the style then popular, the stern understanding of Mendoza seems to have been ill adapted. "Though he composed," says Bouterwek, "in the Italian manner with less facility than Boscan and Garcilasso, he felt more correctly than they or any other of his countrymen the difference between the Spanish and Italian languages, with respect to their capabilities for versification. The Spanish admits of none of those pleasing elisions, which, particularly when terminating vowels are omitted, render the mechanism of Italian versification so easy, and enable the poet to augment or diminish the number of syllables according to his pleasure; and this difference in the two languages renders the composition of a Spanish sonnet a difficult task. Still more does the Spanish language seem hostile to the soft termination of a succession of feminine rhymes, for the Spanish poet, who adopts this rule of the Italian sonnet, is compelled to banish from his rhymes all infinitives of verbs, together with a whole

* Sadolet, in one of his epistles dated 1532 (lib. vi. p. 309. edit. 1554), gives an interesting character of Mendoza, then young, who had visited him at Carpentras on his way to Rome; a journey undertaken solely for the sake of learning.

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host of sonorous substantives and adjectives. Mendoza therefore availed himself of the use of masculine rhymes in his sonnets ; but this metrical licence was strongly censured by all partizans of the Italian style. Nevertheless, had he given to his sonnets more of the tenderness of Petrarch, it is probable that they would have found imitators. Some of them, indeed, may be considered as successful productions, and throughout all the language is correct and noble.” *

Saa di
Miranda.

10. The lyric poems of Mendoza, written in the old national style, tacitly improved and polished, are preferred by the Spaniards to his other works. Many of them are printed in the *Romancero General*. Saa di Miranda, though a Portuguese, has written much in Castilian, as well as in his own language. Endowed by nature with the melancholy temperament akin to poetic sensibility, he fell readily into the pastoral strain, for which his own language is said to be peculiarly formed. The greater and better part of his eclogues, however, are in Castilian. He is said to have chosen the latter language for imagery, and his own for reflection.† Of this poet, as well as of his Castilian contemporaries, the reader will find a sufficient account in Bouterwek and Sismondi.

Ribeyro.

11. Portugal, however, produced one who did not abandon her own soft and voluptuous dialect, Ribeyro ; the first distinguished poet she could boast. His strains are chiefly pastoral, the favourite style of his country, and breathe that monotonous

* p. 198.

† Bouterwek, p. 240. Sismondi.

and excessive melancholy, with which it requires some congenial emotion of our own to sympathise. CHAP.
VIII.
 A romance of Ribeyro, *Menina e Moça*, is one of the earliest among the few specimens of noble prose which we find in that language. It is said to be full of obscure allusions to real events in the author's life, and cannot be read with much interest; but some have thought that it is the prototype of the *Diana* of Montemayor, and the whole school of pastoral romance, which was afterwards admired in Europe for an entire century. We have however seen that the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro has the priority; and I am not aware that there is any specific distinction between that romance and this of Ribeyro. It should be here observed, that Ribeyro should perhaps have been mentioned before; his eclogues seem to have been written, and possibly published, before the death of Emanuel in 1521. The romance however was a later production.*

12. The French versifiers of the age of Francis I. are not few. It does not appear that they rise above the level of the three preceding reigns, Louis XI., Charles VIII., and Louis XII.; some of them mistaking insipid allegory for the creations of fancy, some tamely describing the events of their age, others, with rather more spirit, satirising the vices of mankind, and especially of the clergy; while many, in little songs, expressed their ideal love with more perhaps of conventional gallantry French
poetry.

* Bouterwek, *Hist. of Portuguese*. Liter. p. 24. Sismondi, iv. 280.

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Marot.

than passion or tenderness*, yet with some of those light and graceful touches which distinguish this style of French poetry. Clement Marot ranks far higher. The psalms of Marot, though famous in their day, are among his worst performances. His distinguishing excellence is a naïveté, or pretended simplicity, of which it is the highest praise to say, that it was the model of La Fontaine. This style of humour, than which nothing is more sprightly or diverting, seems much less indigenous among ourselves, if we may judge by our older literature, than either among the French or Italians.

Their
metrical
structure.

13. In the days of Marot, French poetry had not put on all its chains. He does not observe the regular alternation of masculine and feminine rhymes, nor scruple the open vowel, the suppression of a mute *e* before a consonant in scanning the verse, the carrying on the verse, without a pause, to the middle of the next line. These blemishes, as later usage accounts them, are common to Marot with all his contemporaries. In return, they dealt much in artificial schemes of recurring words or lines, as the chant royal, where every stanza was to be in the same rhyme, and to conclude with the same verse; or the rondeau, a very popular species of metre long afterwards, wherein two or three initial words were repeated at the refrain or close of every stanza.†

German
poetry.

14. The poetical and imaginative spirit of Germany, subdued as it had long been, was never so

* Goujet, Bibliothèque Française, vols. x. and xi. passim. Auguis, Recueil des anciens Poètes Français, vols. ii. and iii.

† Goujet, Bibl. Française, xi. 36. Gaillard, Vie de François I., vii. 20. Pasquier, Recherches de la France, l. vii. c. 5. Auguis, vol. iii.

weak as in this century. Though we cannot say that this poverty of genius was owing to the Reformation, it is certain that the Reformation aggravated very much in this sense the national debasement. The controversies were so scholastic in their terms, so sectarian in their character, so incapable of alliance with any warmth of soul, that, so far as their influence extended, and that was to a large part of the educated classes, they must have repressed every poet, had such appeared, by rendering the public insensible to his superiority. The Meister-Singers were sufficiently prosaic in their original constitution ; they neither produced, nor perhaps would have suffered to exhibit itself, any real excellence in poetry. But they became in the sixteenth century still more rigorous in their requisitions of a mechanical conformity to rule ; while at the same time they prescribed a new code of law to the versifier, that of theological orthodoxy. Yet one man, of more brilliant fancy and powerful feeling than the rest, Hans Sachs, the shoemaker of Nuremberg, stands out from the crowd of these artisans. Most conspicuous as a dramatic writer, his copious muse was silent in no line of verse. Heinsius accounts the bright period of Hans Sachs's literary labours to have been from 1530 to 1538 ; though he wrote much both sooner and after that time. His poems of all kinds are said to have exceeded six thousand ; but not more than one fourth of them are in print. In this facility of composition he is second only to Lope de Vega ; and it must be presumed that, uneducated, unread, accustomed to find his public in his

Hans
Sachs.

CHAP.
VIII.

own class, so wonderful a fluency was accompanied by no polish, and only occasionally by gleams of vigour and feeling. The German critics are divided concerning the genius of Hans Sachs: Wieland and Goethe gave him lustre at one time by their eulogies; but these having been as exaggerated as the contempt of a former generation, the place of the honest and praiseworthy shoemaker seems not likely to be fixed very high; and there has not been demand enough for his works, which are very scarce, to encourage their republication.*

German
hymns.

15. The Germans, constitutionally a devout people, were never so much so as in this first age of protestantism. And this, in combination with their musical temperament, displayed itself in the peculiar line of hymns. No other nation has so much of this poetry. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the number of religious songs was reckoned at 33,000, and that of their authors at 500. Those of Luther have been more known than the rest; they are hard and rude, but impressive and deep. But this poetry, essentially restrained in its flight, could not develop the creative powers of genius.†

Theuer-
danks of
Pfintzing.

16. Among the few poems of this age none has been so celebrated as the Theuerdanks of Melchior Pfintzing, secretary to the emperor Maximilian; a poem at one time attributed to the master, whose praises it records, instead of the servant. This singular work, published originally in 1517, with more

* Heinsius, iv. 150. Bouterwek, ix. 381. Retrospective Review, vol. x.

† Bouterwek, Heinsius.

ornament of printing and delineation than was usual, is an allegory, with scarce any spirit of invention or language; wherein the knight Theuerdanks, and his adventures in seeking the marriage of the princess Ehrreich, represent the memorable union of Maximilian with the heiress of Burgundy. A small number of German poets are commemorated by Bouterwek and Heinsius, superior no doubt in ability to Pfintzing, but so obscure in our eyes, and so little extolled by their countrymen, that we need only refer to their pages.

17. In the earlier part of this period of thirty years, we can find very little English poetry. Sir David Lyndsay, an accomplished gentleman and scholar of Scotland, excels his contemporary Skelton in such qualities, if not in fertility of genius. Though inferior to Dunbar in vividness of imagination and in elegance of language, he shows a more reflecting and philosophical mind; and certainly his satire upon James V. and his court is more poignant than the other's panegyric upon the Thistle. But in the ordinary style of his versification he seems not to rise much above the prosaic and tedious rhymers of the fifteenth century. His descriptions are as circumstantial without selection as theirs; and his language, partaking of a ruder dialect, is still more removed from our own. The poems of Lyndsay were printed in 1540, and are among the very first fruits of the Scottish press; but one of these, the Complaint of the Papingo, had appeared in London two years before. Lyndsay's poetry is said to have contributed to the Reformation in Scotland; in which

English
poetry.
Lyndsay.

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VIII.

however he is but like many poets of his own and preceding times. The clergy were an inexhaustible theme of bitter reproof.

Wyatt and
Surrey.

18. "In the latter end of king Henry VIII.'s reign," says Puttenham in his *Art of Poesie*, "sprung up a new company of courtly makers, of whom Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder and Henry Earl of Surrey were the two chieftains, who having travailed into Italy, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and stile of the Italian poesie, as novices newly crept out of the schools of Dante, Ariosto, and Petrarch, they greatly polished our rude and homely manner of vulgar poesie, from that it had bene before, and for that cause may justly be sayd the first reformers of our English meeter and stile. In the same time or not long after was the Lord Nicolas Vaux, a man of much facilitie in vulgar makings."* The poems of Sir John Wyatt, who died in 1544, and of the Earl of Surrey, executed in 1547, were first published in 1557, with a few by other hands, in a scarce little book called *Tottel's Miscellanies*. They were, however, in all probability known before; and it seems necessary to mention them in this period, as they mark an important epoch in English literature.

19. Wyatt and Surrey, for we may best name them in the order of time, rather than of civil or poetical rank, have had recently the good fortune to be recommended by an editor of extensive acquaintance with literature, and of still superior taste. It will be a gratification to read the following comparison of the two poets, which I extract the

* Puttenham, book. i. ch. 31.

more willingly that it is found in a publication somewhat bulky and expensive for the mass of readers. CHAP.
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20. "They were men whose minds may be said to have been cast in the same mould ; for they differ only in those minuter shades of character which always must exist in human nature ; shades of difference so infinitely varied, that there never were and never will be two persons in all respects alike. In their love of virtue and their instinctive hatred and contempt of vice, in their freedom from personal jealousy, in their thirst after knowledge and intellectual improvement, in nice observation of nature, promptitude to action, intrepidity and fondness for romantic enterprise, in magnificence and liberality, in generous support of others and high-spirited neglect of themselves, in constancy in friendship, and tender susceptibility of affections of a still warmer nature, and in every thing connected with sentiment and principle, they were one and the same ; but when those qualities branch out into particulars, they will be found in some respects to differ. Dr. Nott
character
of them.

21. "Wyatt had a deeper and more accurate penetration into the characters of men than Surrey had ; hence arises the difference in their satires. Surrey, in his satire against the citizens of London, deals only in reproach ; Wyatt in his, abounds with irony, and those nice touches of ridicule which make us ashamed of our faults, and therefore often silently effect amendment.* Surrey's

* Wyatt's best poem, in this is a very close imitation of the style, the Epistle to John Poins, tenth satire of Alamanni ; it is

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observation of nature was minute ; but he directed it towards the works of nature in general, and the movements of the passions, rather than to the foibles and characters of men ; hence it is that he excels in the description of rural objects, and is always tender and pathetic. In Wyatt's Complaint we hear a strain of manly grief which commands attention, and we listen to it with respect for the sake of him that suffers. Surrey's distress is painted in such natural terms, that we make it our own, and recognize in his sorrows emotions which we are conscious of having felt ourselves.

22. " In point of taste and perception of propriety in composition, Surrey is more accurate and just than Wyatt ; he therefore seldom either offends with conceits, or wearies with repetition, and when he imitates other poets, he is original as well as pleasing. In his numerous translations from Petrarch, he is seldom inferior to his master ; and he seldom improves upon him. Wyatt is almost always below the Italian, and frequently degrades a good thought by expressing it so that it is hardly recognizable. Had Wyatt attempted a translation

abridged, but every thought and every verse in the English is taken from the Italian. Dr. Nott has been aware of this ; but it certainly detracts a leaf from the laurel of Wyatt, though he has translated well.

The lighter poems of Wyatt are more unequal than those of Surrey ; but his ode to his lute does not seem inferior to any production of his noble competitor. The sonnet in which he intimates his secret passion for Anne Boleyn,

whom he describes under the allegory of a doe, bearing on her collar —

Noli me tangere : I Cæsar's
am,

is remarkable for more than the poetry, though that is pleasing. It may be doubtful whether Anne were yet queen ; but in one of Wyatt's latest poems, he seems to allude penitentially to his passion for her.

of Virgil, as Surrey did, he would have exposed himself to unavoidable failure." *

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23. To remarks so delicate in taste and so founded in knowledge, I should not venture to add much of my own. Something however may generally be admitted to modify the ardent panegyrics of an editor. Those who, after reading this brilliant passage, should turn for the first time to the poems either of Wyatt or of Surrey, might think the praise too unbounded, and, in some respects perhaps, not appropriate. It seems to be now ascertained, after sweeping away a host of foolish legends and traditionary prejudices, that the Geraldine of Surrey, Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald, was a child of thirteen, for whom his passion, if such it is to be called, began several years after his own marriage.† But in fact there is more of the conventional tone of amorous song, than of real emotion, in Surrey's poetry. The

Perhaps
rather ex-
aggerated.

"Easy sighs, such as men draw in love,"

are not like the deep sorrows of Petrarch, or the fiery transports of the Castilians.

24. The taste of this accomplished man is more striking than his poetical genius. He did much for his own country and his native language. The versification of Surrey differs very considerably from that of his predecessors. He introduced, as Dr. Nott says, a sort of involution into his style,

Surrey im-
proves our
versifica-
tion.

* Nott's edition of Wyatt and Surrey, ii. 156. fell in love, if so it was, in 1541, with Geraldine, who was born in 1528.

† Surrey was born about 1518, married Lady Frances Vere 1535,

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which gives an air of dignity and remoteness from common life. It was in fact borrowed from the licence of Italian poetry, which our own idiom has rejected. He avoids pedantic words, forcibly obtruded from the Latin, of which our earlier poets, both English and Scots, had been ridiculously fond. The absurd epithets of Hoccleve, Lydgate, Dunbar, and Douglas are applied equally to the most different things, so as to show that they annexed no meaning to them. Surrey rarely lays an unnatural stress on final syllables, merely as such, which they would not receive in ordinary pronunciation; another usual trick of the school of Chaucer. His words are well chosen and well arranged.

Introduces
blank verse.

25. Surrey is the first who introduced blank verse into our English poetry. It has been doubted whether it had been previously employed in Italian, save in tragedy; for the poems of Alamanni and Rucellai were not published before many of our noble poet's compositions had been written. Dr. Nott, however, admits that Boscan and other Spanish poets had used it. The translation by Surrey of the second book of the *Æneid*, in blank verse, is among the chief of his productions. No one had, before his time, known how to translate or imitate with appropriate expression. But the structure of his verse is not very harmonious, and the sense is rarely carried beyond the line.

Dr. Nott's
hypothesis
as to his
metre.

26. If we could rely on a theory, advanced and ably supported by his editor, Surrey deserves the still more conspicuous praise of having brought about a great revolution in our poetical numbers.

It had been supposed to be proved by Tyrwhitt, that Chaucer's lines are to be read metrically, in ten or eleven syllables, like the Italian, and, as I apprehend, the French of his time. For this purpose, it is necessary to presume that many terminations, now mute, were syllabically pronounced; and where verses prove refractory after all our endeavours, Tyrwhitt has no scruple in declaring them corrupt. It may be added, that Gray, before the appearance of Tyrwhitt's essay on the versification of Chaucer, had adopted without hesitation the same hypothesis.* But, according to Dr. Nott, the verses of Chaucer, and of all his successors down to Surrey, are merely rhythmical, to be read by cadence, and admitting of considerable variety in the number of syllables, though ten may be the more frequent. In the manuscripts of Chaucer, the line is always broken by a cæsure in the middle, which is pointed out by a virgule; and this is preserved in the early editions down to that of 1532. They come near, therefore, to the short Saxon line, differing chiefly by the alternate rhyme, which converts two verses into one. He maintains that a great many lines of Chaucer cannot be read metrically, though harmonious as verses of cadence. This rhythmical measure he proceeds to show in Hoccleve, Lydgate, Hawes, Barclay, Skelton, and even Wyatt; and thus concludes, that it was first abandoned by Surrey, in whom it very rarely occurs.†

27. This hypothesis, it should be observed, derives some additional plausibility from a passage in

* Gray's Works (edit. Mathias.) to second volume of his Wyatt and Surrey.

ii. 1.

† Nott's Dissertation, subjoined

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Gascoyne's "Notes of instruction concerning the making of verse or rhyme in English," printed in 1575. "Whosoever do peruse and well consider his (Chaucer's) works, he shall find that, although his lines are not always of one self-same number of syllables, yet being read by one that hath understanding, the longest verse, and that which hath most syllables in it, will fall (to the ear) correspondent unto that which hath fewest syllables; and likewise that which hath fewest syllables shall be found yet to consist of words that have such natural sound, as may seem equal in length to a verse which hath many more syllables of lighter accents."

But seems
too ex-
tensive.

28. A theory so ingeniously maintained, and with so much induction of examples, has naturally gained a good deal of credit. I cannot, however, by any means concur in the extension given to it. Pages may be read in Chaucer, and still more in Dunbar, where every line is regularly and harmoniously decasyllabic; and though the cæsura may perhaps fall rather more uniformly than it does in modern verse, it would be very easy to find exceptions, which could not acquire a rhythmical cadence by any artifice of the reader.* The deviations

* Such as these, among multitudes more:—

A lover, and a lusty bachelor.

Chaucer.

But reason, with the shield of gold so shene.

Dunbar.

The rock, again the river resplendent.

Id.

Lydgate apologises for his own lines, —

Because I know the verse therein is wrong,

As being some too short, and some too long, —

in Gray, ii. 4. This seems at once to exclude the rhythmical system, and to account for the imperfection of the metrical. Lydgate has perhaps on the whole more aberrations from the decasyllable standard than Chaucer.

from the normal type, or decasyllable line, were they more numerous than, after allowance for the licence of pronunciation, as well as the probable corruption of the text, they appear to be, would not, I conceive, justify us in concluding that it was disregarded. These aberrant lines are much more common in the dramatic blank verse of the seventeenth century. They are, doubtless, vestiges of the old rhythmical forms; and we may readily allow that English versification had not, in the fifteenth or even sixteenth centuries, the numerical regularity of classical or Italian metre. In the ancient ballads, Scots and English, the substitution of the anapæst for the iambic foot is of perpetual recurrence, and gives them a remarkable elasticity and animation; but we never fail to recognise a uniformity of measure, which the use of nearly equipollent feet cannot, on the strictest metrical principles, be thought to impair.

29. If we compare the poetry of Wyatt and Surrey with that of Barclay or Skelton, about thirty or forty years before, the difference must appear wonderful. But we should not, with Dr. Nott, attribute this wholly to superiority of genius. It is to be remembered that the later poets wrote in a court, and in one which, besides the aristocratic manners of chivalry, had not only imbibed a great deal of refinement from France and Italy, but a considerable tinge of ancient litera-

Politeness
of Wyatt
and Surrey.

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesie* (1586), book ii. ch. 3, 4., though he admits the licentiousness of Chaucer, Lydgate, and other poets in occasionally disregarding

the cæsure, does not seem to doubt that they wrote by metrical rules; which indeed is implied in the other. Dr. Nott's theory cannot allow a want of cæsure.

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ture. Their predecessors were less educated men, and they addressed a more vulgar class of readers. Nor was this polish of language peculiar to Surrey and his friend. In the short poems of Lord Vaux, and of others about the same time, even in those of Nicolas Grimoald, a lecturer at Oxford, who was no courtier, but had acquired a classical taste, we find a rejection of obsolete and trivial phrases, and the beginnings of what we now call the style of our older poetry.

Latin
poetry.

Sanna-
zarius.

30. No period since the revival of letters has been so conspicuous for Latin poetry as the present. Three names of great reputation adorn it, Sannazarius, Vida, Fracastorius. The first of these, Sannazarius, or San Nazaro, or Actius Sincerus, was a Neapolitan, attached to the fortunes of the Aragonese line of kings; and following the last of their number Frederic, after his unjust spoliation, into France, remained there till his master's death. Much of his poetry was written under this reign, before 1503; but his principal work, *De Partu Virginis*, did not appear till 1522. This has incurred not unjust blame for the intermixture of classical mythology, at least in language, with the Gospel story; nor is the latter very skilfully managed. But it would be difficult to find its equal for purity, elegance, and harmony of versification. The unauthorised word, the doubtful idiom, the modern turn of thought, so common in Latin verse, scarce ever appear in Sannazarius; a pure taste enabled him to diffuse a Virgilian hue over his language; and a just ear, united with facility in command of words, rendered his versification me-

ludicrous and varied beyond any competitor. The Piscatory Eclogues of Sannazarius, which are perhaps better known, deserve at least equal praise; they seem to breathe the beauty and sweetness of that fair bay they describe. His elegies are such as may compete with Tibullus. If Sannazarius does not affect sublimity, he never sinks below his aim; the sense is sometimes inferior to the style, as he is not wholly free from conceits*; but it would probably be more difficult to find cold and prosaic passages in his works than in those of any other Latin poet in modern times.

31. Vida of Cremona is not by any means less Vida. celebrated than Sannazarius; his poem on the Art of Poetry, and that on the Game at Chess, were printed in 1527; the Christiad, an epic poem, as perhaps it deserves to be called, in 1535; and that on Silk-worms in 1537. Vida's precepts are clear and judicious, and we admire in his Game of Chess especially, and the poem on Silk-worms, the skill with which the dry rules of art, and descriptions the most apparently irreducible to poetical conditions, fall into his elegant and classical language. It has been observed, that he is the first who laid down rules for imitative harmony, illustrating them by his own example. The Christiad shows not so much, I think, of Vida's great talents, at least in poetical language; but the subject is

* The following lines, on the constellation Taurus, are more puerile than any I have seen in this elegant poet:

Torva bovi facies; sed qua non
altera cœlo

Dignior, imbriferum quæ cornibus
inchoet annum,
Nec quæ tam claris mugitibus as-
tra lacessat.

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better managed than by Sannazarius. Yet, notwithstanding some brilliant passages, among which the conclusion of the second book *De Arte Poetica* is prominent, Vida appears to me far inferior to the Neapolitan poet. His versification is often hard and spondaic, the elisions too frequent, and the cæsura too much neglected. The language, even where the subject best admits of it, is not so elevated as we should desire.

Fracastorius.

32. Fracastorius has obtained his reputation by the *Syphilis*, published in 1530; and certainly, as he thought fit to make choice of the subject, there is no reader but must admire the beauty and variety of his digressions, the vigour and nobleness of his style. Once only has it been the praise of genius, to have delivered the rules of practical art in all the graces of the most delicious poetry, without inflation, without obscurity, without affectation, and generally perhaps with the precision of truth. Fracastorius, not emulous in this of the author of the *Georgics*, seems to have made Manilius rather, I think, than Lucretius, his model in the didactic portion of his poem.

Latin verse
not to be
disdained.

33. Upon a fair comparison we should not err much, in my opinion, by deciding that Fracastorius is the greater poet, and Sannazarius the better author of Latin verses. In the present age it is easy to anticipate the supercilious disdain of those who believe it ridiculous to write Latin poetry at all, because it cannot, as they imagine, be written well. I must be content to answer, that those who do not know when such poetry is good, should be as slow to contradict those who do, as the ignorant in

music to set themselves against competent judges. No one pretends that Sannazarius was equal to Ariosto. But it may be truly said, that his poetry, and a great deal more that has been written in Latin, beyond comparison excels most of the contemporary Italian; we may add, that its reputation has been more extended and European.

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34. After this famous triumvirate, we might reckon several in different degrees of merit. Bembo comes forward again in these lists. His Latin poems are not numerous; that upon the lake Benacus is the best known. He shone more however in elegiac than hexameter verse. This is a common case in modern Latin, and might be naturally expected of Bembo, who had more of elegance than of vigour. Castiglione has left a few poems, among which the best is in the archaic lapidary style, on the statue of Cleopatra in the Vatican. Molza wrote much in Latin; he is the author of the epistle to Henry VIII., in the name of Catherine, which has been ascribed to Joannes Secundus. It is very spirited and Ovidian. These poets were perhaps surpassed by Nagearius and Flaminus; both, but especially the latter, for sweetness and purity of style, to be placed in the first rank of lyric and elegiac poets in the Latin language. In their best passages, they fall not by any means short of Tibullus or Catullus. Aonius Palearius, though his poem on the Immortality of the Soul is equalled by Sadolet himself to those of Vida and Sannazarius, seems not entitled to any thing like such an eulogy. He became afterwards suspected of Lutheranism, and lost his life on the

Other
Latin poets
in Italy.

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scaffold at Rome. We have in another place mentioned the *Zodiacus Vitæ* of Palingenius Stellatus, whose true name was Manzolli. The *Deliciæ Poetarum Italarum* present a crowd of inferior imitations of classical models; but I must repeat that the volumes selected by Pope, and entitled *Poemata Italarum*, are the best evidences of the beauties of these poets.

In Ger-
many.

35. The cisalpine nations, though at a vast distance from Italy, cannot be reckoned destitute, in this age, of respectable Latin poets. Of these the best known, and perhaps upon the whole the best, is Joannes Secundus, who found the doves of Venus in the dab-chicks of Dutch marshes. The Basia, however, are far from being superior to his elegies, many of which, though not correct, and often sinning by false quantity, a fault pretty general with these early Latin poets, especially on this side of the Alps, are generally harmonious, spirited, and elegant. Among the Germans, Eobanus Hessus, Micyllus, professor at Heidelberg, and Melanchthon, have obtained considerable praise.

SECT. II. 1520—1550.

*State of Dramatic Representation in Italy — Spain and Portugal — France
— Germany — England.*

Italian
comedy.

36. WE have already seen the beginnings of the Italian comedy, founded in its style, and frequently in its subjects, upon Plautus. Two of Ariosto's comedies have been mentioned, and two more be-

long to this period. Some difference of opinion has existed with respect to their dramatic merit. But few have hesitated to place above them the *Mandragola* and *Clitia* of a great contemporary genius, Machiavel. The *Mandragola* was probably written before 1520, but certainly in the fallen fortunes of its author, as he intimates in the prologue. Ginguéné, therefore, forgot his chronology, when he supposes Leo X. to have been present, as cardinal, at its representation.* It seems however to have been acted before this pope at Rome. The story of the *Mandragola*, which hardly bears to be told, though Ginguéné has done it, is said to be founded on a real and recent event at Florence, one of its striking resemblances to the Athenian comedy. It is admirable for its comic delineations of character, the management of the plot, and the liveliness of its idiomatic dialogue. Peter Aretin, with little of the former qualities, and inferior in all respects to Machiavel, has enough of humorous extravagance to amuse the reader. The licentiousness of the Italian stage in its contempt of morality, and even, in the comedies of Peter Aretin, its bold satire on the great, remind us rather of Athens than of Rome; it is more the effrontery of Aristophanes than the pleasant freedom of Plautus. But the depravity which had long been increasing in Italy, gained in this first part of the sixteenth century a zenith which it could not surpass, and from which it has very gradually receded. These comedies

Machiavel.

Aretin.

* Ginguéné, vi. 222.

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are often very satirical on the clergy; the bold strokes of Machiavel surprise us at present; but the Italian stage had something like the licence of a masquerade; it was a tacit agreement that men should laugh at things sacred within those walls, but resume their veneration for them at the door.*

Tragedy.

Sperone
Cinthio.

37. Those who attempted the serious tone of tragedy were less happy in their model; Seneca generally represented to them the ancient buskin. The Canace of Sperone Speroni, the Tullia of Martelli, and the Orbecche of Giraldi Cinthio, esteemed the best of nine tragedies he has written, are within the present period. They are all works of genius. But Ginguéné observes how little advantage the first of these plays afforded for dramatic effect, most of the action passing in narration. It is true that he could hardly have avoided this without aggravating the censures of those who, as Crescimbeni tells us, thought the subject itself unfit for tragedy.† The story of the Orbecche is taken by Cinthio from a novel of his own invention, and is remarkable for its sanguinary and disgusting circumstances. This became the characteristic of tragedy in the sixteenth century; not by any means peculiarly in England, as some half-informed critics of the French school used to

* Besides the plays themselves, see Ginguéné, vol. vi., who gives more than a hundred pages to the Calandra, and the comedies of Ariosto, Machiavel, and Aretin. Many of the old comedies are reprinted in the great Milan collection of *Classici Italiani*. Those of Machiavel and

Ariosto are found in most editions of their works.

† *Della volgar poesia*, ii. 391. Alfieri went still farther than Sperone in his *Mirra*. Objections of a somewhat similar kind were made to the Tullia of Martelli.

pretend. The *Orbecche*, notwithstanding its passages in the manner of Titus Andronicus, is in many parts an impassioned and poetical tragedy. Riccoboni, though he censures the general poverty of style, prefers one scene in the third act to any thing on the stage: "If one scene were sufficient to decide the question, the *Orbecche* would be the finest play in the world."* Walker observes, that this is the first tragedy wherein the prologue is separated from the play, of which, as is very well known, it made a part on the ancient theatre. But in *Cinthio*, and in other tragic writers long afterwards, the prologue continued to explain and announce the story.†

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38. Meantime, a people very celebrated in dramatic literature was forming its national theatre. A few attempts were made in Spain to copy the classical model. But these seem not to have gone beyond translation, and had little effect on the public taste. Others in imitation of the *Celestina*, which passed for a moral example, produced tedious scenes, by way of mirrors of vice and virtue, without reaching the fame of their original. But a third class was far more popular, and ultimately put an end to competition. The founders of this were Torres Naharro, in the first years of Charles, and Lope de Rueda, a little later. "There is very little doubt," says Bouterwek, "that Torres Naharro was the real inventor of the Spanish comedy. He not only wrote his eight comedies in *redondillas* in the romance style, but he also

Spanish
drama.

Torres
Naharro.

* Hist. du Théâtre Italien, vol. i.

† Walker, Essay on Italian Tragedy. Ginguéné, vi. 61. 69.

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endeavoured to establish the dramatic interest solely on an ingenious combination of intrigues, without attaching much importance to the development of character, or the moral tendency of the story. It is besides probable, that he was the first who divided plays into three acts, which, being regarded as three days' labour in the dramatic field, were called *jornadas*. It must therefore be unreservedly admitted, that these dramas, considered both with respect to their spirit and their form, deserve to be ranked as the first in the history of the Spanish national drama; for in the same path which Torres Naharro first trod, the dramatic genius of Spain advanced to the point attained by Calderon, and the nation tolerated no dramas except those which belonged to the style which had thus been created."*

Lope de
Rueda.

39. Lope de Rueda, who is rather better known than his predecessor, was at the head of a company of players, and was limited in his inventions by the capacity of his troop and of the stage upon which they were to appear. Cervantes calls him the great Lope de Rueda, even when a greater Lope was before the world. "He was not," to quote again from Bouterwek, "inattentive to general character, as is proved by his delineation of old men, clowns, &c. in which he was particularly successful. But his principal aim was to interweave in his dramas a succession of intrigues; and as he seems to have been a stranger to the art of producing stage effect by striking situations, he made complication the

* p. 285. Andr  s thinks Naharro low, insipid, and unworthy of the praise of Cervantes. v. 136.

great object of his plots. Thus mistakes, arising from personal resemblances, exchanges of children, and such-like common-place subjects of intrigue, form the ground-work of his stories, none of which are remarkable for ingenuity of invention. There is usually a multitude of characters in his dramas, and jests and witticisms are freely introduced, but these in general consist of burlesque disputes in which some clown is engaged.”*

40. The Portuguese Gil Vicente may perhaps compete with Torres Naharro for the honour of leading the dramatists of the Peninsula. His Autos indeed, as has been observed, do not, so far as we can perceive, differ from the mysteries, the religious dramas of France and England. Bouterwek, strangely forgetful of these, seems to have assigned a character of originality, and given a precedence, to the Spanish and Portuguese Autos which they do not deserve. The specimen of one of these by Gil Vicente in the History of Portuguese Literature, is far more extravagant and less theatrical than our John Parfre's contemporary mystery of Candlemas Day. But a few comedies, or, as they are more justly styled, farces, remain; one of which, mentioned by the same author, is superior in choice and management of the fable to most of the rude productions of that time. Its date is unknown: Gil Vicente's dramatic compositions of various kinds were collectively published in 1562; he had died in 1557, at a very advanced age.

41. “These works,” says Bouterwek of the

* p. 282.

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dramatic productions of Gil Vicente in general, "display a true poetic spirit, which however accommodated itself entirely to the age of the poet, and which disdained cultivation. The dramatic genius of Gil Vicente is equally manifest from his power of invention, and from the natural turn and facility of his imitative talent. Even the rudest of these dramas is tinged with a certain degree of poetic feeling." * The want of complex intrigue, such as we find afterwards in the Castilian drama, ought not to surprise us in these early compositions.

Mysteries
and moralities in
France.

42. We have no record of any original dramatic composition belonging to this age in France, with the exception of mysteries and moralities, which are very abundant. These were considered, and perhaps justly, as types of the regular drama. "The French morality," says an author of that age, "represents in some degree the tragedy of the Greeks and Romans; particularly because it treats of serious and important subjects; and if it were contrived in French that the conclusion of the morality should be always unfortunate, it would become a tragedy. In the morality, we treat of noble and virtuous actions, either true, or at least probable; and choose what makes for our instruction in life."† It is evident from this passage and

* Hist. of Portuguese Lit. p. 83—111. It would be vain to look elsewhere for so copious an account of Gil Vicente, and very difficult probably to find his works. See too Sismondi, *Hist. de la Litt. du Midi*, iv. 448.

† Sibilet, *Art Poétique* (1548), apud Beauchamps, *Recherches sur le Théâtre Français*, i. 82.

In the *Jardin de Plaisance*, an anonymous undated poem, printed at Lyons probably before the end of the fifteenth century, we have rules given for composing moralities. Beauchamps (p. 86) extracts some of these; but they seem not worth copying.

the whole context, that neither tragedy nor comedy were yet known. The circumstance is rather remarkable, when we consider the genius of the nation, and the politeness of the court. But from about the year 1540 we find translations from Latin and Italian comedies into French. These probably were not represented. *Les Amours d'Erostrate*, by Jacques Bourgeois, published in 1545, is taken from the *Suppositi* of Ariosto. Sibilet translated the *Iphigenia* of Euripides in 1549, and Bouchetel the *Hecuba* in 1550; Lazarus Baif, two plays about the same time. But a great dramatic revolution was now prepared by the strong arm of the state. The first theatre had been established at Paris about 1400 by the *Confrairie de la Passion de N. S.*, for the representation of scriptural mysteries. This was suppressed by the parliament in 1547, on account of the scandal which this devout buffoonery had begun to give. The company of actors purchased next year the *Hotel de la Bourgogne*, and were authorised by the parliament to represent profane subjects, "lawful and decent," (*licites et honnêtes*), but enjoined to abstain from "all mysteries of the passion, or other sacred mysteries."*

43. In Germany, meantime, the pride of the meister-singers, Hans Sachs, was alone sufficient to pour forth a plenteous stream for the stage. His works, collectively printed at Nuremberg in five folio volumes, 1578, and reprinted in five quartos at Kempton, 1606, contain 197 dramas among the

German
theatre.
Hans
Sachs.

* Beauchamps, i. 91.

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Moralities
and similar
plays in
England.

rest. Many of his comedies in one act, called Schwanken, are coarse satires on the times. Invention, expression, and enthusiasm, if we may trust his admirers, are all united in Hans Sachs.*

44. The mysteries founded upon scriptural or legendary histories, as well as the moralities, or allegorical dramas, which, though there might be an intermixture of human character with abstract personification, did not aim at that illusion which a possible fable affords, continued to amuse the English public. Nor were they confined, as perhaps they were before, to churches and monasteries. We find a company of players in the establishment of Richard III. while Duke of Gloucester; and in the subsequent reigns, especially under Henry VIII., this seems to have been one of the luxuries of the great. The frugal Henry VII. maintained two distinct sets of players; and his son was prodigally sumptuous in every sort of court-exhibition, bearing the general name of revels, and superintended by a high priest of jollity, styled the abbot of misrule. The dramatic allegories, or moral plays, found a place among them. It may be presumed that from their occasionality, or want of merit, far the greater part have perished.† Three or four, which we may place before 1550, are published in

* Hans Sachs has met with a very laudatory critic in the *Retro-spective Review*, x. 113., who even ventures to assert that Goethe has imitated the old shoemaker in Faust.

The Germans had many plays in this age. Gesner says, in his *Pandectæ Universales: Germanicæ fa-*

bulæ multæ extant. Fabula decem ætatum et Fusio stultorum Colmaricæ actæ sunt. Fusio edita est 1537, chartis quatuor. Qui volet hoc loco plures ascribat in vulgaribus linguis, nos ad alia festinamus.

† Collier's *Annals of the Stage*, i. 34, &c.

Hawkins's *Ancient Drama* and Dodsley's *Old Plays*; one is extant, written by Skelton, the earliest of a known author.* A late writer, whose diligence seems to have almost exhausted our early dramatic history, has retrieved the names of a few more. The most ancient of these moral plays he traces to the reign of Henry VI. They became gradually more complicated, and approached nearer to a regular form. It may be observed that a line is not easily defined between the scriptural mysteries and the legitimate drama; the choice of the story, the succession of incidents, are those of tragedy; even the intermixture of buffoonery belongs to all our ancient stage; and it is only by the meanness of the sentiments and diction that we exclude the *Candlemas-Day*, which is one of the most perfect of the mysteries, or even those of the fifteenth century, from our tragic series.† Nor were the moralities, such as we find them in the reign of Henry VIII., at a prodigious distance from the regular stage; deviations from the original structure of these, as Mr. Collier has well observed, "by the relinquishment of abstract for individual character, paved the way, by a natural and easy gradation, for tragedy and comedy, the representations of real life and manners."‡

45. The moralities were, in this age, distinguished by the constant introduction of a witty,

They are
turned to
religious
satire.

* Warton, iii. 188.

† *Candlemas Day*, a mystery, on the murder of the Innocents, is published in Hawkins's *Early English Drama*. It is by John Parfre, and may be referred to the first years of Henry VIII.

‡ *Hist. of English Dramatic Poetry*, ii. 260. This I quote by its proper title; but it is in fact the same work as the *Annals of the Stage*, so far as being incorporated, and sold together, renders it the same.

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mischievous, and profligate character, denominated the Vice. This seems originally to have been an allegorical representation of what the word denotes; but the vice gradually acquired a human individuality, in which he came very near to our well-known Punch. The devil was generally introduced in company with the vice, and had to endure many blows from him. But the moralities had another striking characteristic in this period. They had always been religious, but they now became theological. In the crisis of that great revolution then in progress, the stage was found a ready and impartial instrument for the old or the new faith. Luther and his wife were satirised in a Latin morality represented at Gray's Inn in 1529. It was easy to turn the tables on the clergy. Sir David Lyndsay's satire of the Three Estatis, a direct attack upon them, was played before James V. and his queen at Linlithgow in 1539 *; and in 1543 an English statute was made, prohibiting all plays and interludes, which meddle with the interpretation of Scripture. In 1549, the council of Edward VI. put a stop by proclamation to all kinds of stage-plays.†

Latin
plays.

46. Great indulgence, or a strong antiquarian prejudice, is required to discover much genius in these moralities and mysteries. There was, however, a class of dramatic productions that appealed to a more instructed audience. The custom of acting Latin plays prevailed in our universities at this time, as it did long afterwards. Whether it

* Warton, iv. 23.

† Collier, i. 144.

were older than the fifteenth century seems not to be proved; and the presumption is certainly against it. "In an original draught," says Warton, "of the statutes of Trinity College at Cambridge, founded in 1546, one of the chapters is entitled, "*De Præfecto ludorum qui imperator dicitur,*" under whose direction and authority Latin comedies and tragedies are to be exhibited in the hall at Christmas."* It is probable that Christopherson's tragedy of Jephthah, and another by Grimoald on John the Baptist, both older than the middle of the century, were written for academical representation. Nor was this confined to the universities. Nicolas Udal, head master of Eton, wrote several plays in Latin to be acted in the long nights of winter by his boys.† And if we had to stop here, it might seem an unnecessary minuteness to take notice of the diversions of school-boys, especially as the same is recorded of other teachers besides Udal. But there is something more in this. Udal has lately become known in a new and more brilliant light, as the father of English comedy. It was mentioned by Warton, but without any com-

First English
comedy.

* Hist. of Engl. Poetry, iii. 205.

† Udal was not the first, if we could trust Harwood's Alumni Etonenses, who established an Eton theatre. Of Rightwise, who succeeded Lily as master of St. Paul's, it is said by him, that he was "a most eminent grammarian, and wrote the tragedy of Dido from Virgil, which was acted before Cardinal Wolsey with great applause by himself and other scholars of Eton." But as Right-

wise left Eton for King's College in 1508, this cannot be true, at least so far as Wolsey is concerned. It is said afterwards in the same book of one Hallewill, who went to Cambridge in 1532, that he wrote "the tragedy of Dido." Which should we believe, or were there two Didos? But Harwood's book is not reckoned of much authority beyond the mere records which he copied.

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ment, that Nicolas Udal wrote some English plays to be represented by his scholars, a passage from one of which is quoted by Wilson in his *Art of Logic* dedicated to Edward VI.* It might have been conjectured, by the help of this quotation, that these plays were neither of the class of moralities or mysteries, nor mere translations from Plautus and Terence, as it would not have been unnatural at first to suppose. Within a few years, however, the comedy from which Wilson took his extract has been discovered. It was printed in 1565, but probably written not later than 1540. The title of this comedy is *Ralph Roister Foister*, a name uncouth enough, and from which we should expect a very barbarous farce. But Udal, an eminent scholar, knew how to preserve comic spirit and humour without degenerating into licentious buffoonery. *Ralph Roister Foister*, in spite of its title, is a play of some merit, though the wit may seem designed for the purpose of natural merriment rather than critical glory. We find in it, what is of no slight value, the earliest lively picture of London manners among the gallants and citizens, who furnished so much for the stage down to the civil wars. And perhaps there is no striking difference in this respect between the dramatic manners under Henry VIII. and James I. This comedy, for there seems no kind of reason why it should be refused that honourable name, is much superior to Gammar Gurton's needle, written twenty years afterwards, from which it has wrested

* Hist. of Engl. Poetry, iii. 213.

a long-established precedence in our dramatic annals.*

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SECT. III.

Romances and Novels — Rabelais.

47. THE popularity of Amadis de Gaul gave rise to a class of romances, the delight of the multitude in the sixteenth century, though since chiefly remembered by the ridicule and ignominy that has attached itself to their name, those of knight-errantry. Most of these belong to Spanish or Portuguese literature. Palmerin of Oliva, one of the earliest, was published in 1525. Palmerin, less fortunate than his namesake of England, did not escape the penal flame to which the barber and curate consigned many also of his younger brethren. It has been observed by Bouterwek that every respectable Spanish writer, as well as Cervantes, resisted the contagion of bad taste which kept the prolix mediocrity of these romances in fashion.†

Romances
of chivalry.

48. A far better style was that of the short novel, which the Italian writers, especially Boccaccio, had rendered popular in Europe. But, though many of these were probably written within this period of thirty years, none of much distinction come within it, as the date of their earliest publication, except the celebrated Belphegor of Ma-

Novels.

* See an analysis with extracts of Ralph Roister Foister, in Collier's Hist. of Dram. Poetry, ii. 445

† Hist. of Spanish Literature, p. 304. Dunlop's Hist. of Fiction vol. ii.

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chiavel.* The amusing story of *Lazarillo de Tormes* was certainly written by Mendoza in his youth. But it did not appear in print till 1586. This is the first known specimen in Spain of the picaresque, or rogue style, in which the adventures of the low and rather dishonest part of the community are made to furnish amusement for the great. The Italian novelists are by no means without earlier instances; but it became the favourite, and almost peculiar class of novel with the Spanish writers about the end of the century.

Rabelais.

49. But the most celebrated, and certainly the most brilliant performance in the path of fiction, that belongs to this age, is that of Rabelais. Few books are less likely to obtain the praise of a rigorous critic; but few have more the stamp of originality, or show a more redundant fertility, always of language, and sometimes of imagination. He bears a slight resemblance to Lucian, and a considerable one to Aristophanes. His reading is large, but always rendered subservient to ridicule;

* I cannot make another exception for *Il Pellegrino* by Caviceo of Parma, the first known edition of which, published at Venice in 1526, evidently alludes to one earlier; diligentermente in lingua toska corretto, e novamente stampato et historiato. The editor speaks of the book as obsolete in orthography and style. It is probably however not older than the last years of the fifteenth century, being dedicated to Lucrezia Borgia. It is a very prolix and tedious romance, in three books and two hundred and nineteen chapters, written in a semi-poetical diffuse style, and much in the usual manner

of love stories. Cinguéné and Tiraboschi do not mention it; the *Biographie Universelle* does.

Mr. Dunlop has given a short account of a French novel, entitled *les Aventures de Lycidas et de Cleorithe*, which he considers as the earliest and best specimen of what he calls the spiritual romance, unmixt with chivalry or allegory. iii. 51. It was written in 1529, by Basire, archdeacon of Sens. I should suspect that there had been some of this class already in Germany; they certainly became common in that country and in England afterwards.

he is never serious in a single page, and seems to have had little other aim, in his first two volumes, than to pour out the exuberance of his animal gaiety. In the latter part of Pantagruel's history, that is, the fourth and fifth books, one published in 1552, the other, after the author's death, in 1561, a dislike to the church of Rome, which had been slightly perceived in the first volumes, is not at all disguised ; but the vein of merriment becomes gradually less fertile, and weariness anticipates the close of a work which had long amused while it disgusted us. Allusions to particular characters are frequent, and, in general, transparent enough, with the aid of a little information about contemporaneous history, in several parts of Rabelais ; but much of what has been taken for political and religious satire cannot, as far as I perceive, be satisfactorily traced beyond the capricious imagination of the author. Those who have found Montluc, the famous bishop of Valence, in Panurge, or Antony of Bourbon, father of Henry IV., in Pantagruel, keep no measures with chronology. Panurge is so admirably conceived, that we may fairly reckon him original ; but the germ of the character is in the gracioso, or clown, of the extemporaneous stage ; the roguish, selfish, cowardly, cunning attendant, who became Panurge in the plastic hands of Rabelais, and Sancho in those of Cervantes. The French critics have not in general done justice to Rabelais, whose manner was not that of the age of Louis XIV. The Tale of a Tub appears to me by far the closest imitation of it, and to be conceived altogether in a kindred

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spirit ; but in general those who have had reading enough to rival the copiousness of Rabelais have wanted his invention and humour, or the riotousness of his animal spirits.

SECT. IV.

Struggle between Latin and Italian Languages — Italian and Spanish polite Writers — Criticism in Italy — In France and England.

Contest of
Latin and
Italian lan-
guages.

50. AMONG the polished writers of Italy, we meet on every side the name of Bembo ; great in Italian as well as in Latin literature, in prose as in verse. It is now the fourth time that it occurs to us ; and in no instance has he merited more of his country. Since the fourteenth century, to repeat what has been said before, so absorbing had become the love of ancient learning, that the natural language, beautiful and copious as it really was, and polished as it had been under the hands of Boccaccio, seemed to a very false-judging pedantry scarce worthy of the higher kinds of composition. Those too who with enthusiastic diligence had acquired the power of writing Latin well, did not brook so much as the equality of their native language. In an oration delivered at Bologna in 1529 before the emperor and pope, by Romolo Amaseo, one of the good writers of the sixteenth century, he not only pronounced a panegyric upon the Latin tongue, but contended that the Italian should be reserved for shops and markets, and the conversation of the

vulgar* ; nor was this doctrine, probably in rather a less degree, uncommon during that age. A dialogue of Sperone relates to this debated question, whether the Latin or Italian language should be preferred ; one of the interlocutors (probably Lazzaro Buonamici, an eminent scholar) disdaining the latter as a mere corruption. It is a very ingenious performance, well conducted on both sides, and may be read with pleasure. The Italians of that age are as clever in criticism as they are wearisome on the common-places of ethics. It purports to have been written the year after the oration of Romolo Amaseo, to which it alludes.

51. It is an evidence of the more liberal spirit that generally accompanies the greatest abilities, that Bembo, much superior to Amaseo in fame as a Latin writer, should have been among the first to retrieve the honour of his native language by infusing into it that elegance and selection of phrase which his taste had taught him in Latin, and for which the Italian is scarcely less adapted. In the dialogue of Sperone quoted above, it is said that "it was the general opinion no one would write Italian who could write Latin ; a prejudice in some measure lightened by the poem of Politian on the tournament of Julian de' Medici, but not taken away till Bembo, a Venetian gentleman, as learned in the ancient languages as Politian, showed that he did not disdain his maternal tongue."†

Influence
of Bembo
in this.

52. It is common in the present age to show as indiscriminating a disdain of those who wrote in

Apology
for Latin-
ists.

* Tiraboschi, x. 389.

† p. 430. (edit. 1596).

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Latin as they seem to have felt towards their own literature. But the taste and imagination of Bembo are not given to every one; and we must remember, in justice to such men as Amaseo, who, though they imitate well, are yet but imitators in style, that there was really scarce a book in Italian prose written with any elegance, except the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio; the manner of which, as Tiraboschi justly observes, however suitable to those sportive fictions, was not very well adapted to serious eloquence.* Nor has the Italian language, we may add, in its very best models, attained so much energy and condensation as will satisfy the ear or the understanding of a good Latin scholar; and there can be neither pedantry nor absurdity in saying, that it is an inferior organ of human thought. The most valid objection to the employment of Latin in public discourses or in moral treatises, is its exclusion of those whose advantage we are supposed to seek, and whose sympathy we ought to excite. But this objection, though not much less powerful in reality than at present, struck men less sensibly in that age, when long use of the ancient language, in which even the sermons of the clergy were frequently delivered, had taken away the sense of its impropriety.†

* x. 402.

† Sadolet himself had rather discouraged Bembo from writing Italian, as appears from one of his epistles, thanking his friend for the present of a book, perhaps *le Prose*. Sed tu fortasse conjicis ex eo, illa mihi non placere, quod te avocare solebam ab illis literis. Faciebam ego id quidem, sed con-

silio, ut videbar, bono. Cum enim in Latinis major multo inesset dignitas, tuque in ea facultate princeps mihi longe viderere, non tam abstraherem te illinc, quam huc vocabam. Nec studium reprehenderam in illis tuum, sed te majora quædam spectare debere arbitrabar. *Epist. lib. ii. p. 55.*

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VIII.Character
of the con-
troversy.

53. This controversy points out some degree of change in public opinion, and the first stage of that struggle against the aristocracy of erudition, which lasted more or less for nearly two centuries, till, like other struggles of still more importance, it ended in the victory of the many. In the days of Poggio and Politian, the native Italian no more claimed an equality, than the plebeians of Rome demanded the consulship in the first years of the republic. These are the revolutions of human opinion, bearing some analogy and parallelism to those of civil society, which it is the business of an historian of literature to indicate.

Life of
Bembo.

54. The life of Bembo was spent, after the loss of his great patron Leo X., in literary elegance at Padua. Here he formed an extensive library and collection of medals; and here he enjoyed the society of the learned, whom that university supplied, or who visited him from other parts of Italy and Europe. Far below Sadolet in the solid virtues of his character, and not probably his superior in learning, he has certainly left a greater name, and contributed more to the literary progress of his native country. He died at an advanced age in 1547; having a few years before obtained a cardinal's hat on the recommendation of Sadolet.*

Character
of Italian
and Spanish
style.

55. The style of some other Italian and Spanish writers, Castiglione, Sperone, Machiavel, Guevara, Oliva, has been already adverted to when the subject of their writings was before us; and it would be tedious to dwell upon them again in this point

* Tiraboschi, ix. 296. Corniani, iv. 99. Sadolet. Epist. lib. xii. p. 555.

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of view. The Italians have been accustomed to associate almost every kind of excellence with the word cinquecento. They extol the elegant style and fine taste of those writers. But Andrès has remarked with no injustice, that if we find purity, correctness, and elegance of expression in the chief prose writers of this century, we cannot but also acknowledge an empty prolixity of periods, a harsh involution of words and clauses, a jejune and wearisome circuitry of sentences, with a striking deficiency of thought. "Let us admit the graces of mere language in the famous authors of this period; but we must own them to be far from models of eloquence, so tedious and languid as they are."* The Spanish writers of the same century, he says afterwards, nourished as well as the Italian with the milk of antiquity, transfused the spirit and vigour of these ancients into their own compositions, not with the servile imitation of the others, nor seeking to arrange their phrases and round their periods, the source of langour and emptiness, so that the best Spanish prose is more flowing and harmonious than the contemporary Italian.†

English
writers.

56. The French do not claim, I believe, to have produced at the middle of the sixteenth century any prose writer of a polished or vigorous style, Calvin excepted, the dedication of whose Institutes to Francis I. is a model of purity and elegance for the age.‡ Sir Thomas More's Life of Edward V.,

More.

* Andrès, vii. 68.

† Id. 72.

‡ Neufchateau, Essai sur les

meilleurs ouvrages dans la langue Française, p. 135.

written about 1509, appears to me the first example of good English language; pure and perspicuous, well-chosen, without vulgarisms or pedantry.* His polemical tracts are inferior, but not ill-written. We have seen that Sir Thomas Elyot had some vigour of style. Ascham, whose *Toxophilus*, or dialogue on archery, came out in 1544, does not excel him. But his works have been reprinted in modern times, and are consequently better known than those of Elyot. The early English writers are seldom select enough in their phrases to bear such a critical judgment as the academicians of Italy were wont to exercise.

Ascham.

57. Next to the models of style, we may place those writings which are designed to form them. In all sorts of criticism, whether it confines itself to the idioms of a single language, or rises to something like a general principle of taste, the Italian writers had a decided priority in order of time as well as of merit. We have already mentioned the earliest work, that of Fortunio, on Italian grammar. Liburnio, at Venice, in 1521, followed with his *Volgari Eleanzie*. But this was speedily eclipsed by a work of Bembo, published in 1525, with the rather singular title, *Le Prose*. These observations on the native language, commenced more than twenty years before, are written in dialogue, supposed to originate in the great controversy of that age, whether it were worthy of a

Italian criticism.

* This has been reprinted entire in Holingshed's Chronicle; and the reader may find a long extract in the preface to Todd's edition of John-

son's Dictionary. I should name the account of Jane Shore as a model of elegant narration.

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Bembo.

man of letters to employ his mother-tongue instead of Latin. Bembo well defended the national cause; and by judicious criticism on the language itself, and the best writers in it, put an end to the most specious argument under which the advocates of Latin sheltered themselves,—that the Italian, being a mere congeries of independent dialects, varying not only in pronunciation and orthography, but in their words and idioms, and having been written with unbounded irregularity and constant adoption of vulgar phrases, could afford no certain test of grammatical purity or graceful ornament. It was thought necessary by Bembo to meet this objection by the choice of a single dialect; and though a Venetian, he had no hesitation to recognise the superiority of that spoken in Florence. The Tuscan writers of that century proudly make use of his testimony in aid of their pretensions to dictate the laws of Italian idiom. Varchi says, “The Italians cannot be sufficiently thankful to Bembo, for having not only purified their language from the rust of past ages, but given it such regularity and clearness, that it has become what we now see.” This early work, however, as might be expected, has not wholly escaped the censure of a school of subtle and fastidious critics, in whom Italy became fertile.*

58. Several other treatises on the Italian language appeared even before the middle of the century; though few comparatively with the more celebrated and elaborate labours of criticism in its

* Ginguéné, vii. 390. Corniani, iv. 111.

latter portion. None seem to deserve mention, unless it be the *Observations of Lodovico Dolce* (Venice 1550), which were much improved in subsequent editions. Of the higher kind of criticism which endeavours to excite and guide our perceptions of literary excellence, we find few or no specimens, even in Italy, within this period, except so far as the dialogues of Bembo furnish instances.

59. France was not destitute of a few obscure treatises at this time, enough to lay the foundations of her critical literature. The complex rules of French metre were to be laid down ; and the language was irregular in pronunciation, accent, and orthography. These meaner, but necessary, elements of correctness occupied three or four writers, of whom Goujet has made brief mention ; Sylvius, or Du Bois, who seems to have been the earliest writer on grammar ; Stephen Dolet, better known by his unfortunate fate, than by his essay on French punctuation * ; and though Goujet does not name him, we may add an Englishman, Palsgrave, who published a French grammar in English as early as 1530.† An earlier production than any of these is the *Art de plaine rhétorique*, by Peter Fabry, 1521 ; in which, with the help of some knowledge of Cicero, he attempted, but with little correctness, and often in absurd expressions, to establish the principles of oratory. If his work is no better than Goujet represents it to be, its popularity must denote a low condition of literature in France.‡ The first who aspired to lay down any thing like laws of taste in

Grammarians and critics in France.

* Goujet, *Bibliothèque Française*, i. 42. 81.

† Biogr. Univ., Palsgrave.

‡ Goujet, i. 361.

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poetry, was Thomas Sibilet, whose *Art Poétique* appeared in 1548. This is in two books; the former relating to the metrical rules of French verse, the latter giving precepts, short and judicious, for different kinds of composition. It is not, however, a work of much importance.*

Ortho-
graphy of
Meigret.

60. A more remarkable grammarian of this time was Louis Meigret, who endeavoured to reform orthography by adapting it to pronunciation. In a language where these had come to differ so prodigiously as they did in French, something of this kind would be silently effected by the printers; but the bold scheme of Meigret went beyond their ideas of reformation; and he complains that he could not prevail to have his words given to the public in the form he preferred. They were ultimately less rigid; and the new orthography appears in some grammatical treatises of Meigret, published about 1550. It was not, as we know, very successful; but he has credit given him for some improvements which have been retained in French printing. Meigret's French grammar, it has been said, is the first that contains any rational or proper principles of the language. It has been observed, I know not how correctly, that he was the first who denied the name of case to those modifications of sense in nouns which are not marked by inflexion; and the writer to whom I am indebted for this adds, what is more worth attention, that this limited meaning of the word case, which the mo-

* Goujet, iii. 92.

dern grammars generally adopt, is rather an arbitrary deviation from their predecessors.*

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61. It would have been strange, if we could exhibit a list of English writers on the subject of our language in the reign of Henry VIII., when it has, at all times, been the most neglected department of our literature. The English have ever been as indocile in acknowledging the rules of criticism, even those which determine the most ordinary questions of grammar, as the Italians and French have been voluntarily obedient. Nor had they as yet drunk deep enough of classical learning to discriminate, by any steady principle, the general beauties of composition. Yet among the scanty rivulets that the English press furnished, we find "The Art or Craft of Rhetoryke," dedicated by Leonard Cox to Hugh Faringdon, abbot of Reading. This book, which, though now very scarce, was translated into Latin, and twice printed at Cracow in the year 1526†, is the work of a schoolmaster and man of reputed learning. The English edition has no date, but was probably published about 1524. Cox says: "I have partly translated out of a work of rhetoric written in the Latin tongue, and partly compiled of my own, and so made a little treatise in manner of an introduction into this aforesaid science, and that in the English tongue, remembering that every good thing, after the saying of the philosopher, the more common the better it is." His art of rhetoric follows the usual distri-

Cox's art of
rhetoric.

* Biogr. Univ., Meigret, a good article. Goujet, i. 83.

† Panzer.

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VIII.**

bution of the ancients, both as to the kinds of oration and their parts; with examples, chiefly from Roman history, to direct the choice of arguments. It is hard to say how much may be considered as his own. The book is in duodecimo, and contains but eighty-five pages; it would of course be unworthy of notice in a later period.

CHAP. IX.

ON THE SCIENTIFIC AND MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURE OF EUROPE FROM 1520 TO 1550.

SECT. I.

On Mathematical and Physical Science.

1. THE first translation of Euclid from the Greek text was made by Zamberti of Venice, and appeared in 1505. It was republished at Basle in 1537. The Spherics of Theodosius and the Conics of Apollonius were translated by men, it is said, more conversant with Greek than with geometry. A higher praise is due to Werner of Nuremberg, the first who aspired to restore the geometrical analysis of the ancients. The treatise of Regiomontanus on triangles was first published in 1533. It may be presumed that its more important contents were already known to geometers. Montucla hints that the editor Schæner may have introduced some algebraic solutions which appear in this work ; but there seems no reason to doubt, that Regiomontanus was sufficiently acquainted with that science. The treatise of Vitello on optics, which belongs

CHAP.
IX.Geometrical
treatises.

CHAP. IX. to the thirteenth century, was first printed in 1533.*

Fernel.

Rhœticus.

2. Oronce Finée, with some reputation in his own times, has, according to Montucla, no pretension to the name of a geometer; and another Frenchman, Fernel, better known as a physician, who published a *Cosmotheoria* in 1527, though he first gave the length of a degree of the meridian, and came not far from the truth, arrived at it by so unscientific a method, being in fact no other than counting the revolutions of a wheel along the main road, that he cannot be reckoned much higher.† These are obscure names in comparison with Joachim, surnamed Rhœticus from his native country. After the publication of the work of Regiomontanus on trigonometry, he conceived the project of carrying those labours still further; and calculated the sines, tangents, and secants, the last of which he first reduced to tables, for every minute of the quadrant, to a radius of unity followed by fifteen cyphers; one of the most remarkable monuments, says Montucla, of human patience, or rather of a devotion to science, the more meritorious that it could not be attended with much glory. But this work was not published till 1594, and then not so complete as Rhœticus had left it.‡

Cardan and Tartaglia.

3. Jerome Cardan is, as it were, the founder of the higher algebra; for, whatever he may have borrowed from others, we derive the science from his *Ars Magna*, published in 1545. It contains

* Montucla, Kästner.

† Montucla, ii. 316. Kästner,

‡ Montucla, i. 582. Biogr. Univ., art. Joachim. Kästner, i. 561.

many valuable discoveries; but that which has been most celebrated is the rule for the solution of cubic equations, generally known by Cardan's name, though he had obtained it from a man of equal genius in algebraic science, Nicolas Tartaglia. The original inventor appears to have been Scipio Ferreo, who, about 1505, by some unknown process, discovered the solution of a single case; that of $x^3 + px = q$. Ferreo imparted the secret to one Fiore, or Floridus, who challenged Tartaglia to a public trial of skill, not unusual in that age. Before he heard of this, Tartaglia, as he assures us himself, had found out the solution of two other forms of cubic equation; $x^3 + px^2 = q$; and $x^3 - px^2 = q$. When the day of trial arrived, Tartaglia was able not only to solve the problems offered by Fiore, but to baffle him entirely by others which resulted in the forms of equation, the solution of which had been discovered by himself. This was in 1535; and four years afterwards Cardan obtained the secret from Tartaglia under an oath of secrecy. In his *Ars Magna*, he did not hesitate to violate this engagement; and, though he gave Tartaglia the credit of the discovery, revealed the process to the world.* He has said himself, that by the help of Ferrari, a very good mathematician, he extended his rule to some cases not comprehended

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Cubic equations.

* Playfair, in his second dissertation in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, though he cannot but condemn Cardan, seems to think Tartaglia rightly treated for having concealed his discovery; and others have echoed this strain. Tartaglia himself says, in a passage I have read in Cossali, that he meant to

have divulged it ultimately; but in that age money as well as credit was to be got by keeping the secret; and those who censure him wholly forget, that the solution of cubic equations was, in the actual state of algebra, perfectly devoid of any utility to the world.

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IX.Beauty of
the dis-
covery.

in that of Tartaglia; but the best historian of early algebra seems not to allow this claim.*

4. This writer, Cossali, has ingeniously attempted to trace the process by which Tartaglia arrived at this discovery†; one which, when compared with the other leading rules of algebra, where the invention, however useful, has generally lain much nearer the surface, seems an astonishing effort of sagacity. Even Harriott's beautiful generalisation of the composition of equations was prepared by what Cardan and Vieta had done before, or might have been suggested by observation in the less complex cases.‡

* Cossali, *Storia Critica d' Algebra* (1797), ii. 96, &c. Hutton's *Mathematical Dictionary*. Montucla, i. 591. Kästner, i. 152.

† Ibid. p. 145. Tartaglia boasts of having discovered that the cube of $p+q=p^3+p^2q+pq^2+q^3$. Such was the ignorance of literal algebra; yet in this state of the science he solved cubic equations.

‡ Cardan strongly expresses his sense of this recondite discovery. And as the passage in which he retraces the early progress of algebra is short, and is quoted from Cardan's works, which are scarce in England, by Kästner, who is himself not very commonly known here, I shall transcribe the whole passage, as a curiosity for our philomaths. *Hæc ars olim a Mahomete Mosis Arabis filio initium sumpsit. Etenim hujus rei locupletis testis Leonardus Pisanus. Reliquit autem capitula quatuor, cum suis demonstrationibus quas nos locis suis ascribemus. Post multa vero temporum intervalla tria capitula derivativa addita illis sunt, incerto autore, quæ tamen cum principalibus a Luca Paciolo*

posita sunt. Demum etiam ex primis, alia tria derivativa, a quodam ignoto viro inventa legi, hæc tamen minimè in lucem prodierant, cum essent aliis longe utiliora, nam cubi et numeri et cubi quadrati æstimationem docebant. Verum temporibus nostris Scipio Ferreus Bononiensis, capitulum cubi et rerum numero æqualium [$x^3 + p x = q$] invenit, rem sane pulchram et admirabilem: cum omnem humanam subtilitatem, omnis ingenii mortalis claritatem ars hæc superet, donum projecto cæleste, experimentum autem virtutis animorum, atque adeo illustre, ut qui hæc attigerit nihil non intelligere posse se credat. Hujus æmulatione Nicolaus Tartalea Brixellensis, amicus noster, cum in certamen cum illius discipulo Antonio Maria Florido venisset, capitulum idem ne vinceretur invenit, qui mihi ipsum multis precibus exoratus tradidit. Deceptus enim ego verbis Lucæ Pacioli, qui ultra sua capitula generale ullum aliud esse posse negat (quanquam tot jam antea rebus a me inventis sub manibus esset, desperabam) tamen [et ?]

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IX.Cardan's
other dis-
coveries.

5. Cardan, though not entitled to the honour of this discovery, nor even equal, perhaps, in mathematical genius to Tartaglia, made a great epoch in the science of algebra; and, according to Cossali and Hutton, has a claim to much that Montucla has unfairly or carelessly attributed to his favourite Vieta. "It appears," says Dr. Hutton, "from this short chapter (lib. x. cap. 1. of the *Ars Magna*), that he had discovered most of the principal properties of the roots of equations, and could point out the number and nature of the roots, partly from the signs of the terms, and partly from the magnitude and relations of the co-efficients." Cossali has given the larger part of a quarto volume to the algebra of Cardan; his object being to establish the priority of the Italian's claim to most of the discoveries ascribed by Montucla to others, and especially to Vieta. Cardan knew how to transform a complete cubic equation into one wanting the second term; one of the flowers which Montucla has placed on the head of Vieta; and this he explains so fully, that Cossali charges the French historian of mathematics with having never read the *Ars Magna*.* Leonard of Pisa had been

invenire q. quærere non audebam, [sic, sed perperam nonnihil scribi liquet]. Inde autem illo habito demonstrationem venatus, intellexi complura alia posse haberi. Ac eo studio, auctaque jam confidentia, per me partim, ac etiam aliqua per Ludovicum Ferrarium, olim alumnus nostrum, inveni. Porro quæ ab his inventa sunt, illorum nominibus decorabuntur, cætera quæ

nomine carent nostra sunt. At etiam demonstrationes, præter tres Mahometis, et duas Ludovici, omnes nostræ sunt, singulæque capitibus suis præponentur, inde regula addita, subjicietur experimentum. Kästner, p. 152. The passage in Italics is also quoted by Cossali, p. 159.

* p. 164.

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aware that quadratic equations might have two positive roots; but Cardan first perceived, or at least first noticed, the negative roots, which he calls "*fictæ radices*."* In this perhaps there is nothing extraordinary; the algebraic language must early have been perceived by such acute men as exercised themselves in problems to give a double solution of every quadratic equation; but, in fact, the conditions of these problems, being always numerical, were such as to render a negative result practically false, and impertinent to the solution. It is therefore, perhaps, without much cause that Cossali triumphs in the ignorance shown of negative values by Vieta, Bachet, and even Harriott, though Cardan had pointed them out†; since we may better say, that they did not trouble themselves with what, in the actual application of algebra, could be of no utility. Cardan also discovered that every cubic equation has one or three real roots; and that there are as many positive or true roots as changes of sign in the equation; that the co-efficient of the second term is equal to the sum of the roots, so that where it is wanting, the positive and negative values must compensate each other‡; and that the known term is the product of all the roots. Nor was he ignorant of a method of extracting roots by approximation; but in this again the definiteness

* Montucla gives Cardan the credit due for this; at least in his second edition (1799), p. 595.

† i. 23.

‡ It must, apparently, have been through his knowledge of this property of the co-efficient of the

second term, that Cardan recognised the existence of equal roots, even when affected by the same sign (Cossali, ii. 362.); which, considered in relation to the numerical problems then in use, would seem a kind of absurdity.

of solution, which numerical problems admit and require, would prevent any great progress from being made.* The rules are not perhaps all laid down by him very clearly; and it is to be observed that he confined himself chiefly to equations not above the third power; though he first published the method of solving biquadratics, invented by his coadjutor Ferrari. Cossali has also shown that the application of algebra to geometry, and even to the geometrical construction of problems, was known in some cases by Tartaglia and Cardan; thus plucking another feather from the wing of Vieta, or of Descartes. It is a little amusing to see that, after Montucla had laboured with so much success to despoil Harriott of the glory which Wallis had, perhaps with too national a feeling, bestowed upon him for a long list of discoveries contained in the writings of Vieta, a claimant by an older title started up in Jerome Cardan, who, by help of his very accomplished advocate, seems to have established his right at the expense of both.

6. These anticipations of Cardan are the more truly wonderful, when we consider that the symbolical language of algebra, that powerful instrument not only in expediting the processes of thought, but in suggesting general truths to the mind, was nearly unknown in his age. Diophantus,

Imperfections of algebraic language.

* Kästner, p. 161. In one place Cossali shows, that Cardan had transported all the quantities of an equation to one side, making the whole equal to zero; which Wallis has ascribed to Harriott, as

his leading discovery, p. 324. Yet in another passage we find Cossali saying: una somma di quantità uguale al zero avea un' aria mostruosa, e non sapeasi di equazione si fatta concepire idea. p. 159.

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Fra Luca, and Cardan make use occasionally of letters to express indefinite quantities, besides the *res* or *cosa*, sometimes written shortly, for the assumed unknown number of an equation. But letters were not yet substituted for known quantities; and it has been seen in a note, that Tartaglia first discovered, and that by a geometrical construction, what appears so very simple as the equation between the cube of a line and that of any two parts into which it may be divided. Michael Stifel, in his *Arithmetica Integra*, Nuremberg 1544, is said to have first used the signs $+$ and $-$, and numeral exponents of powers.* It is very singular that discoveries of the greatest convenience, and not above the ingenuity of a parish schoolmaster, should have been overlooked by men of extraordinary acuteness, like Tartaglia, Cardan, and Ferrari, and hardly less so, that by dint of this acuteness, they dispensed with the aid of these contrivances, in which we almost fancy the utility of algebraic expression consists.

Copernicus.

7. But the great boast of science during this period is the treatise of Copernicus on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, in six books, published at Nuremberg, in 1543.† This founder of modern

* Hutton, Kästner.

† The title-page and advertisement of so famous a work, and which so few of my readers will have seen, are worth copying from Kästner, ii. 595. Nicolai Copernici Torinensis, de revolutionibus orbium cœlestium libri vi.

Habes in hoc opere jam recens

nato et edito, studiosè lector, motus stellarum tam fixarum quam erraticarum, cum ex veteribus tum etiam ex recentibus observationibus restitutos; et novis insuper ac admirabilibus hypothesis ornatos. Habes etiam tabulas expeditissimas, ex quibus eosdem ad quodvis tempus quam facillime

astronomy was born at Thorn, of a good family, in 1473; and after receiving the best education his country furnished, spent some years in Italy, rendering himself master of all the mathematical and astronomical science at that time attainable. He became possessed afterwards of an ecclesiastical benefice in his own country. It appears to have been about 1507, that, after meditating on various schemes besides the Ptolemaic, he began to adopt and confirm in writing that of Pythagoras, as alone capable of explaining the planetary motions with that simplicity which gives a presumption of truth in the works of nature.* Many years of exact observation confirmed his mind in the persuasion that he had solved the grandest problem which can occupy the astronomer. He seems to have completed his treatise about 1530; but perhaps dreaded the bigoted prejudices which afterwards oppressed Galileo. Hence he is careful to propound his theory as an hypothesis; though it is sufficiently manifest that he did not doubt of its truth. It was first publicly announced by his disciple Joachim Rhœticus, already mentioned for his trigonometry, in the *Narratio de Revolutionibus Copernici*, printed at Dantzic in 1540. The trea-

calcularè poteris. Igitur eme, lege, fruere. *Ἀγέωμετρητος οὐδεὶς εἰσιτω.* Noribergæ, apud Joh. Petreium, anno m̃xlili.

* This is the proper statement of the Copernican argument, as it then stood; it rested on what we may call a metaphysical probability, founded upon its beauty and simplicity; for it is to be remembered that the Ptolemaic hypo-

thesis explained all the phenomena then known. Those which are only to be solved by the supposition of the earth's motion were discovered long afterwards. This excuses the slow reception of the new system, interfering as it did with so many prejudices, and incapable of that kind of proof which mankind generally demand.

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tise of Copernicus himself, three years afterwards, is dedicated to the pope, Paul III., as if to shield himself under that sacred mantle. But he was better protected by the common safeguard against oppression. The book reached him on the day of his death; and he just touched with his hands the great legacy he was to bequeath to mankind. But many years were to elapse, before they availed themselves of the wisdom of Copernicus. The progress of his system, even among astronomers, as we shall hereafter see, was exceeding slow.* We may just mention here, that no kind of progress was made in mechanical or optical science during the first part of the sixteenth century.

SECT. II.

On Medicine and Anatomy.

Revival of
Greek me-
dicine.

8. THE revival of classical literature had an extensive influence where we might not immediately anticipate it, on the science of medicine. Jurisprudence itself, though nominally and exclusively connected with the laws of Rome, was hardly more

* Gassendi, *Vita Copernici*. Biogr. Univ. Montucla. Kästner. Playfair. Gassendi, p. 14—22., gives a short analysis of the great work of Copernicus *de orbium cælestium revolutionibus*, p. 22. The hypothesis is generally laid down in the first of the six books. One of the most remarkable passages in Copernicus is his conjecture that gravitation was not a central tendency, as had been supposed, but

an attraction common to matter, and probably extending to the heavenly bodies, though it does not appear that he surmised their mutual influences in virtue of it: *gravitatem esse affectionem non terræ totius, sed partium ejus propriam, qualem soli etiam et lunæ cæterisque astris convenire credibile est*. These are the words of Copernicus himself, quoted by Gassendi, p. 19.

indebted to the restorers of ancient learning than the art of healing, which seems to own no mistress but nature, no code of laws but those which regulate the human system. But the Greeks, among their other vast superiorities above the Arabians, who borrowed so much, and so much perverted what they borrowed, were not only the real founders, but the best teachers of medicine; a science which in their hands seems, more than any other, to have anticipated the Baconian philosophy; being founded on an induction proceeding by select experience, always observant, always cautious, and ascending slowly to the generalities of theory. But instead of Hippocrates and Galen, the Arabians brought in physicians of their own, men, doubtless of considerable, though inferior merit, and substituted arbitrary or empirical precepts for the enlarged philosophy of the Greeks. The scholastic subtilty also obtruded itself even into medicine; and the writings of the middle ages on these subjects are alike barbarous in style and useless in substance. Pharmacy owes much to this oriental school, but it has retained no reputation in physiological or pathological science.

9. Nicolas Leonicens, who became professor at Ferrara before 1470, was the first restorer of the Hippocratic method of practice. He lived to a very advanced age, and was the first translator of Galen from the Greek.* Our excellent countryman, Linacre, did almost as much for medicine. The College of Physicians, founded by

Linacre
and other
physicians.

* Biogr. Univ. Sprengel, Hist. de la Médecine (traduit par Jourdan), vol. ii.

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Henry VIII. in 1518, venerates him as its original president. His primary object was to secure a learned profession, to rescue the art of healing from mischievous ignorance, and to guide the industrious student in the path of real knowledge, which at that time lay far more through the regions of ancient learning than at present. It was important, not for the mere dignity of the profession, but for its proper ends, to encourage the cultivation of the Greek language, or to supply its want by accurate versions of the chief medical writers.* Linacre himself, and several eminent physicians on the continent, Cop, Ruel, Gonthier, Fuchs, by such labours in translation, restored the school of Hippocrates. That of the Arabians rapidly lost ground, though it preserved through the sixteenth century an ascendancy in Spain; and some traces of its influence, especially the precarious empiricism of judging diseases by the renal secretion, without sight of the patient, which was very general in that age, continued long afterwards in several parts of Europe.†

Medical
innova-
tors.

10. The study of Hippocrates taught the medical writers of this century to observe and describe like him. Their works, chiefly indeed after the period with which we are immediately concerned, are very numerous, and some of them deserve much praise, though neither the theory of the science, nor the power of judiciously observing and describing, was yet in a very advanced state. The besetting sin of all who should have laboured for

* Johnson's Life of Linacre, p. 207. 279. Biogr. Britann. † Sprengel, vol. iii. *passim*.

truth, an undue respect for authority, made Hippocrates and Galen, especially the former, as much the idols of the medical world, as Augustin and Aristotle were of theology and metaphysics. This led to a pedantic erudition, and contempt of opposite experience, which rendered the professors of medicine an inexhaustible theme of popular ridicule. Some however, even at an early time, broke away from the trammels of implicit obedience to the Greek masters. Fernel, one of the first physicians in France, rejecting what he could not approve in their writings, gave an example of free inquiry. Argentier of Turin tended to shake the influence of Galen by founding a school which combated many of his leading theories.* But the most successful opponent of the orthodox creed was Paracelsus. Of his speculative philosophy, or rather the wild chimæras which he borrowed or devised, enough has been said in former pages. His reputation was originally founded on a supposed skill in medicine; and it is probable that, independently of his real merit in the application of chemistry to medicine, and in the employment of very powerful agents, such as antimony, the fanaticism of his pretended philosophy would exercise that potency over the bodily frame, to which disease has, in recent experience, so often yielded.†

Paracelsus.

11. The first important advances in anatomical Anatomy.

* Sprengel, iii. 204. "Argentier," he says, "was the first to lay down a novel and true principle, that the different faculties of

the soul are not inherent in certain distinct parts of the brain."

† Sprengel, vol. iii.

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IX.

Berenger.

knowledge since the time of Mundinus were made by Berenger of Carpi, in his commentary upon that author, printed at Bologna in 1521, which it was thought worth while to translate into English as late as 1664, and in his *Isagogæ breves in anatomiam*, Bologna, 1522. He followed the steps of Mundinus in human dissection, and thus gained an advantage over Galen. Hence we owe to him the knowledge of several specific differences between the human structure and that of quadrupeds. Berenger is asserted to have discovered two of the small bones of the ear, though this is contested on behalf of Achillini. Portal observes, that though some have regarded Berenger as the restorer of the science of anatomy, it is hard to strip one so much superior to him as Vesalius of that honour.*

Vesalius.

12. Every early anatomist was left far behind when Vesalius, a native of Brussels, who acquired in early youth an extraordinary reputation on this side of the Alps, and in 1540 became professor of the science at Pavia, published at Basle, in 1543, his great work *de Corporis humani Fabrica*. If Vesalius was not quite to anatomy what Copernicus was to astronomy, he has yet been said, a little hyperbolically, to have discovered a new world. A superstitious prejudice against human dissection had restrained the ancient anatomists in general to

* Hist. de l'anatomie, i. 277. Portal remarks in his preface, p. xii., that many discoveries supposed to be modern may be detected in the old anatomists; thus Berenger knew that the thorax is larger in man, and the pelvis in woman, which a living anatomist, he says, has assumed as his own. But the Greek sculptors surely knew this as well as Berenger or Portal.

pigs and apes, though Galen, according to Portal, had some experience in the former. Mundinus and Berenger, by occasionally dissecting the human body, had thrown much additional light on its structure; and the superficial muscles, those immediately under the integuments, had been studied by Da Vinci and others for the purposes of painting and sculpture. Vesalius first gave a complete description of the human body, with designs which, at the time, were ascribed to Titian. We have here therefore a great step made in science; the precise estimation of Vesalius's discoveries must be sought, of course, in anatomical history.*

13. "Vesalius," says Portal, in the rapturous strain of one devoted to his own science, "appears to me one of the greatest men who ever existed. Let the astronomers vaunt their Copernicus, the natural philosophers their Galileo and Torricelli, the mathematicians their Pascal, the geographers their Columbus, I shall always place Vesalius above all their heroes. The first study for man is man. Vesalius has had this noble object in view, and has admirably attained it; he has made on himself and his fellows such discoveries as Columbus could only make by travelling to the extremity of the world. The discoveries of Vesalius are of direct importance to man; by acquiring fresh knowledge of his own structure, man seems to enlarge his existence; while discoveries in geography or astronomy affect him but in a very indirect manner." He proceeds to compare him with

Portal's
account
of him.

* Portal, i. 394—433.

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Winslow, in order to show how little had been done in the intermediate time. Vesalius seems not to have known the osteology of the ear. His account of the teeth is not complete; but he first clearly described the bones of the feet. He has given a full account of the muscles, but with some mistakes, and was ignorant of a very few. In his account of the sanguineous and nervous systems, the errors seem more numerous. He describes the intestines better than his predecessors, and the heart very well; the organs of generation not better than they, and sometimes omits their discoveries; the brain admirably, little having since been added.

His human
dissections.

14. The zeal of Vesalius and his fellow-students for anatomical science led them to strange scenes of adventure. Those services, which have since been thrown on the refuse of mankind, they voluntarily undertook.

Entire affection scorneth nicer hands.

They prowled by night in charnel-houses, they dug up the dead from the grave, they climbed the gibbet, in fear and silence, to steal the mouldering carcase of the murderer; the risk of ignominious punishment, and the secret stings of superstitious remorse, exalting no doubt the delight of these useful, but not very enviable pursuits.*

Fate of
Vesalius.

15. It may be mentioned here, that Vesalius, after living for some years in the court of Charles and Philip as their physician, met with a strange

* Portal, p. 395.

reverse, characteristic enough of such a place. Being absurdly accused of having dissected a Spanish gentleman before he was dead, Vesalius only escaped capital punishment, at the instance of the inquisition, by undertaking a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, during which he was shipwrecked, and died of famine in one of the Greek islands.*

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16. The best anatomists were found in Italy. But Francis I. invited one of these, Vidus Vidius, to his royal college at Paris; and from that time France had several of respectable name. Such were Charles Etienne, one of the great typographical family, Sylvius, and Gonthier.† A French writer about 1540, Levasseur, appears to have known, at least, the circulation of the blood through the lungs, as well as the valves of the arteries and veins, and their direction, and its purpose; treading closely on an anticipation of Harvey.‡ Portal has erroneously supposed the celebrated passage of Servetus on the circulation of the blood to be contained in his book *de Trinitatis erroribus*, published in 1531§, whereas it is really found in the *Christianismi restitutio*, which did not appear till 1555. This gives Levasseur a priority of some importance in anatomical history.

Other anatomists.

17. The practice of trusting to animal dissection, from which it was difficult for anatomists to

Imperfection of the science.

* Portal, Tiraboschi, ix. 34. Biogr. Univ.

† Portal, i. 330. et post.

‡ Portal, p. 373., quotes the passage, which seems to warrant this inference, but is rather obscurely worded. It contains, to my apprehension, a much nearer

approximation to the theory of a general circulation than the more famous passage in Servetus; in which I can only perceive an acquaintance with that through the lungs.

§ P. 300.

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extricate themselves, led some men of real merit into errors. They seem also not to have profited sufficiently by the writings of their predecessors. Massa of Venice, one of the greatest of this age, is ignorant of some things known to Berenger. Many proofs occur in Portal, how imperfectly the elder anatomists could yet demonstrate the more delicate parts of the human body.

SECT. III.

On Natural History.

Botany.

18. THE progress of natural history, in all its departments, was very slow, and should of course be estimated by the additions made to the valuable materials collected by Aristotle, Theophrastus, Dioscorides, and Pliny. The few botanical treatises that had appeared before this time were too meagre and imperfect to require mention. Otto Brunfels of Strasburg was the first who published, in 1530, a superior work, *Herbarum vivæ Eicones*, in three volumes folio, with 238 wooden cuts of plants.* Euricius Cordus of Marburg, in his *Botanilogicon*, or dialogues on plants, displays, according to the *Biographie Universelle*, but little knowledge of Greek, and still less observation of nature. Cordus has deserved more praise (though this seems better due to Lorenzo de' Medici), as the

Botanical
gardens.

* Biogr. Univ.

first who established a botanical garden. This was at Marburg, in 1530.* But the fortunes of private physicians were hardly equal to the cost of an useful collection. The university of Pisa led the way by establishing a public garden in 1545, according to the date which Tiraboschi has determined. That of Padua had founded a professorship of botany in 1533.†

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19. Ruel, a physician of Soissons, an excellent Greek scholar, had become known by a translation of Dioscorides in 1516, upon which Huet has bestowed high praise. His more celebrated treatise *de natura stirpium* appeared at Paris in 1536, and is one of the handsomest offspring of that press. It is a compilation from the Greek and Latin authors on botany, made with taste and judgment. His knowledge, however, derived from experience was not considerable, though he has sometimes given the French names of species described by the Greeks, so far as his limited means of observation and the difference of climate enabled him. Many later writers have borrowed from Ruel their general definitions and descriptions of plants, which he himself took from Theophrastus.‡

* Biogr. Univ. Andrès, xiii. 80. Eichhorn, iii. 304. See too Roscoe's *Leo X.*, iv. 125, for some pleasing notices of the early studies in natural history. Pontanus was fond of it; and his poem on the cultivation of the lemon, orange, and citron (*de hortis Hesperidum*) shows an acquaintance with some of the operations of horticulture. The garden of Bembo was also celebrated. Theophrastus and

Dioscorides were published in Latin before 1500. But it was not till about the middle of the sixteenth century that botany, through the commentaries of Matthioli on Dioscorides, began to assume a distinct form, and to be studied as a separate branch.

† ix. 10.

‡ Biogr. Univ., (by M. du Petit Thouars).

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Fuchs.

20. Ruel, however, seems to have been left far behind by Leonard Fuchs, professor of medicine in more than one German university, who has secured a verdant immortality in the well-known *Fuchsia*. Besides many works on his own art, esteemed in their time, he published at Basle in 1542 his *Commentaries on the History of Plants*, containing above 500 figures, a botanical treatise frequently reprinted, and translated into most European languages. "Considered as a naturalist, and especially as a botanist, Fuchs holds a distinguished place, and he has thrown a strong light on that science. His chief object is to describe exactly the plants used in medicine; and his prints, though mere outlines, are generally faithful. He shows that the plants and vegetable products mentioned by Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Hippocrates, and Galen had hitherto been ill known."*

Matthioli.

21. Matthioli, an Italian physician, in a peaceful retreat near Trent, accomplished a laborious repository of medical botany in his *Commentaries on Dioscorides*, published originally, 1544, in Italian, but translated by himself into Latin, and frequently reprinted throughout Europe. Notwithstanding a bad arrangement, and the author's proneness to credulity, it was of great service at a time when no good work on that subject was in existence in Italy; and its reputation seems to have been not only general, but of long duration.†

Low state
of zoology.

22. It was not singular that much should have

* Biogr. Univ., (by M. du Petit Thouars.)

† Tiraboschi, ix. 2. Andrès, xiii. 85. Corniani, vi. 5.

been published, imperfect as it might be, on the natural history of plants, while that of animal nature, as a matter of science, lay almost neglected. The importance of vegetable products in medicine was far more extensive and various ; while the ancient treatises, which formed substantially the chief knowledge of nature possessed in the sixteenth century, are more copious and minute on the botanical than the animated kingdom. Hence we find an absolute dearth of books relating to zoology. P. Jovius de piscibus Romanis is rather the work of a philologer and a lover of good cheer than a naturalist, and treats only of the fish eaten at the Roman tables.* Gillius de vi et natura animalium is little else than a compilation from Ælian and other ancient authors, though Niceron says that the author has interspersed some observations of his own.† No work of the least importance, even for that time, can perhaps be traced in Europe on any part of zoology, before the *Avium præcipuarum historia* of our countryman Turner, published at Cologne in 1548, though this is confined to species described by the ancients. Gesner, in his *Pandects*, which bear date in the same year, several times refers to it with commendation.‡

23. *Agricola*, a native of Saxony, acquired a *Agricola*.

* *Andrès*, xiii. 143. Roscoe's *Leo X. ubi supra*.

† Vol. xxiii. *Biogr. Univ. Andrès*, xiii. 144.

‡ *Pandect. Univers.*, lib. 14. Gesner may be said to make great use of Turner ; a high compliment from so illustrious a naturalist.

He quotes also a book on quadrupeds lately printed in German by Michael Herr. Turner, whom we shall find again as a naturalist, became afterwards dean of Wells, and was one of the early puritans. See Chalmers's Dictionary.

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perfect knowledge of the processes of metallurgy from the miners of Chemnitz, and perceived the immense resources that might be drawn from the abysses of the earth, "He is the first mineralogist," says Cuvier, "who appeared after the revival of science in Europe. He was to mineralogy what Gesner was to zoology; the chemical part of metallurgy, and especially what relates to assaying, is treated with great care, and has been little improved down to the end of the eighteenth century." It is plain that he was acquainted with the classics, the Greek alchemists, and many manuscripts. Yet he believed in the goblins, to whom miners ascribe the effects of mephitic exhalations.*

SECT. IV.

On Oriental Literature.

Hebrew.

24. THE study of Hebrew was naturally one of those which flourished best under the influence of protestantism. It was exclusively connected with scriptural interpretation; and could neither suit the polished irreligion of the Italians, nor the bigotry of those who owned no other standard than the Vulgate translation. Sperone observes in one of his dialogues, that as much as Latin is prized in Italy, so much do the Germans value the Hebrew language.† We have anticipated in another place

* Biogr. Univ.

† P. 102. (edit. 1596.)

the translations of the Old Testament by Luther, Pagninus, and other Hebraists of this age. Sebastian Munster published the first grammar and lexicon of the Chaldee dialect in 1527. His Hebrew grammar had preceded in 1525. The Hebrew lexicon of Pagninus appeared in 1529; and that of Munster himself in 1543. Elias Levita, the learned Jew who has been already mentioned, deserves to stand in this his natural department above even Munster. Among several works that fall within this period we may notice the Masorah (Venice, 1538, and Basle, 1539), wherein he excited the attention of the world by denying the authority and antiquity of vowel points, and a lexicon of the Chaldee and Rabbinical dialects, in 1541. "Those," says Simon, "who would thoroughly understand Hebrew should read the treatises of Elias Levita, which are full of important observations necessary for the explanation of the sacred text." * Pellican, one of the first who embraced the principles of the Zwinglian reform, has merited a warm eulogy from Simon for his *Commentarii Bibliorum*, (Zurich, 1531—1536, five volumes in folio,) especially for avoiding that display of rabbinical learning which the German Hebraists used to affect. †

Elias
Levita.

Pellican.

25. Few endeavours were made in this period towards the cultivation of the other Oriental languages. Pagnino printed an edition of the Koran at Venice in 1530; but it was immediately suppressed; a precaution hardly required, while there was no one able to read it. But it may have been

Arabic and
Oriental
literature.

* Biogr. Univ.

† Id.

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supposed, that the leaves of some books, like that recorded in the Arabian Nights, contain an active poison that does not wait for the slow process of understanding their contents. Two crude attempts at introducing the Eastern tongues were made soon afterwards. One of these was by William Postel, a man of some parts and more reading, but chiefly known, while he was remembered at all, for mad reveries of fanaticism, and an idolatrous veneration for a saint of his own manufacture, la mère Jeanne, the Joanna Southcote of the sixteenth century. We are only concerned at present with his collection of alphabets, twelve in number, published at Paris in 1538. The greater part of these are Oriental. An Arabic grammar followed the same year; but the types are so very imperfect, that it would be difficult to read them. A polyglott alphabet on a much larger scale appeared at Pavia the next year, through the care of Teseo Ambrogio, containing forty languages. Ambrogio gave also an introduction to the Chaldee, Syriac, and Armenian; but very defective, at least as to the two latter. Such rude and incorrect publications hardly deserve the name of beginnings. According to Andrès, Arabic was publicly taught at Paris by Giustiniani, and at Salamanca by Clenardus. The Æthiopic version of the New Testament was printed at Rome in 1548.

SECT. V.

On Geography and History.

26. THE curiosity natural to mankind had been gratified by various publications since the invention of printing, containing either the relations of ancient travellers, such as Marco Polo, or of those under the Spanish or Portuguese flags, who had laid open two new worlds to the European reader. These were for the first time collected, to the number of seventeen, by Simon Grynæus, a learned professor at Basle, in *Novus orbis regionum et insularum veteribus incognitarum*, printed at Paris in 1532. We find also in this collection, besides an introduction to cosmography by Sebastian Munster, a map of the world bearing the date 1531. The cosmography of Apianus, professor at Ingoldstadt, published in 1524, contains also a map of the four quarters of the world. In this of Grynæus's collection, a rude notion of the eastern regions of Asia appears. Sumatra is called Taprobane, and placed in the 150th meridian. A vague delineation of China and the adjacent sea is given; but Catay is marked further north. The island of Gilolo, which seems to be Japan, is about 240° east longitude. This is so far remarkable, that no voyages had yet been made in that sea. South America is noted as *Terra Australis recenter inventa, sed nondum plane cognita*; and there is as much of North America as Sebastian Cabot had discovered, a little enlarged by lucky conjecture. Magellan, by circumnavigating the world, had solved

Geography
of Grynæus.

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a famous problem. We find accordingly in this map an attempt to divide the globe by the 360 meridians of longitude. The best account of his voyage, that by Pigafetta, was not published till 1556; but the first, Maximilianus de insulis Moluccis, appeared in 1523.

Apianus. 27. The *Cosmography* of Apianus, above mentioned, was reprinted with additions by Gemma Frisius in 1533 and 1550. It is however, as a work of mere geography, very brief and superficial; though it may exhibit as much of the astronomical part of the science as the times permitted. That

Munster. of Sebastian Munster, published in 1546, notwithstanding its title, extends only to the German empire.* The *Isolario* of Bordone (Venice, 1528) contains a description of all the islands of the world, with maps.†

Voyages. 28. A few voyages were printed before the middle of the century, which have, for the most part, found their way into the collection of Ramusio. The most considerable is the history of the Indies, that is, of the Spanish dominions in America, by

Oviedo. Gonzalo Hernandez, sometimes called Oviedo, by which name he is placed in the *Biographie Universelle*. The author had resided for some years in St. Domingo. He published a summary of the general and natural history of the Indies in 1526; and twenty books of this entire work in 1535. The remaining thirty did not appear till 1783. In the long list of geographical treatises given by Ortelius, a small number belong to this earlier period of the

* Eichhorn, iii. 294.

† Tiraboschi, ix. 179.

century. But it may be generally said, that the acquaintance of Europe with the rest of the world could as yet be only obtained orally from Spanish and Portuguese sailors or adventurers, and was such as their falsehood and blundering would impart.

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29. It is not my design to comprehend historical literature, except as to the chief publications, in these volumes; and it is hitherto but a barren field; for though Guicciardini died in 1540, his great history did not appear till 1564. Some other valuable histories, those of Nardi, Segni, Varchi, were also kept back through political or other causes, till a comparatively late period. That of Paulus Jovius, which is not in very high estimation, appeared in 1550, and may be reckoned, perhaps, after that of Machiavel, the best of this age. Upon this side of the Alps, several works of this class, to which the historical student has recourse, might easily be enumerated; but none of a philosophical character, or remarkable for beauty of style. I should, however, wish to make an exception for the *Memoirs of the Chevalier Bayard*, written by his secretary, and known by the title of *Le Loyal Serviteur*; they are full of warmth and simplicity. A chronicle bearing the name of Carion, but really written by Melanclithon, and published in the German language, 1532, was afterwards translated into Latin, and became the popular manual of universal history.* But ancient and mediæval history was as yet very imperfectly made known

Historical
works.

* Bayle, art. Carion. Eichhorn, iii. 285.

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to those who had no access to its original sources. Even in Italy little had yet been done with critical or even extensive erudition.

* * * *

Italian acad-
emies.

30. Italy in the sixteenth century was remarkable for the number of her literary academies; institutions, which, though by no means peculiar to her, have in no other country been so general or so conspicuous. We have already taken notice of that established by Aldus Manutius at Venice early in this century, and of those of older date, which had enjoyed the patronage of princes at Florence and Naples, as well as of that which Pomponius Lætus and his associates, with worse auspices, had endeavoured to form at Rome. The Roman academy, after a long season of persecution or neglect, revived in the genial reign of Leo X. "Those were happy days," says Sadolet in 1529, writing to Angelo Colocci, a Latin poet of some reputation, "when in your suburban gardens, or mine on the Quirinal, or in the Circus, or by the banks of the Tiber, we held those meetings of learned men, all recommended by their own virtues and by public reputation. Then it was that after a repast, which the wit of the guests rendered exquisite, we heard poems or orations recited to our great delight, productions of the ingenious Casanuova, the sublime Vida, the elegant and correct Beroaldo, and many others still living or now no more."* Corycius, a wealthy German, encouraged the good-humoured emulation of these Ro-

* Sadolet, *Epist.* p. 225. (edit. 1554). Roscoe has quoted this interesting letter.

man luminaries.* But the miserable reverse, that not long after the death of Leo befell Rome, put an end to this academy, which was afterwards replaced by others of less fame.

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31. The first academies of Italy had chiefly directed their attention to classical literature; they compared manuscripts, they suggested new readings, or new interpretations, they decyphered inscriptions and coins they sat in judgment on a Latin ode, or debated the propriety of a phrase. Their own poetry had, perhaps, never been neglected; but it was not till the writings of Bembo founded a new code of criticism in the Italian language, that they began to study it minutely, and judge of compositions with that fastidious scrupulousness they had been used to exercise upon modern Latinity. Several academies were established with a view to this purpose, and became the self-appointed censors of their native literature. The reader will remember what has been already mentioned, that there was a peculiar source of verbal criticism in Italy, from the want of a recognised standard of idiom. The very name of the language was long in dispute. Bembo maintained that Florentine was the proper appellation. Varchi and other natives of the city have adhered to this very restrictive monopoly. Several, with more plausibility, contended for the name Tuscan; and this, in fact, was so long adopted, that it is hardly yet altogether out of use. The majority, however, were not Tuscans, and while

They pay
regard to
the lan-
guage.

* Roscoe, iii. 480.

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it is generally agreed that the highest purity of their language is to be found in Tuscany, the word Italian has naturally prevailed as its denomination.

Their fond-
ness for
Petrarch.

32. The academy of Florence was instituted in 1540 to illustrate and perfect the *Tuscan* language, especially by a close attention to the poetry of Petrarch. Their admiration of Petrarch became an exclusive idolatry; the critics of this age would acknowledge no defect in him, nor excellence in any different style. Dissertations and commentaries on Petrarch, in all the diffuseness characteristic of the age and the nation, crowd the Italian libraries. We are, however, anticipating a little in mentioning them; for few belong to so early a period as the present. But by dint of this superstitious accuracy in style, the language rapidly acquired a purity and beauty which has given the writers of the sixteenth century a value in the eyes of their countrymen, not always so easily admitted by those who, being less able to perceive the delicacy of expression, are at leisure to yawn over their frequent tediousness and inanity.

They be-
come nu-
merous.

33. The Italian academies, which arose in the first half of the century, and we shall meet with others hereafter, are too numerous to be reckoned in these pages. The most famous were the *Intornati* of Siena, founded in 1525, and devoted, like that of Florence, to the improvement of their language; the *Infiammati* of Padua, founded by some men of high attainments in 1534; and that of Modena, which, after a short career of brilliancy, fell under such suspicions of heresy, and was sub-

jected to such inquisitorial jealousy about 1542, that it never again made any figure in literary history.*

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34. Those academies have usually been distinguished by little peculiarities, which border sometimes on the ridiculous, but serve probably, at least in the beginning, to keep up the spirit of such societies. They took names humourously quaint; they adopted devices and distinctions, which made them conspicuous, and inspired a vain pleasure in belonging to them. The Italian nobility, living a good deal in cities, and restrained from political business, fell willingly into these literary associations. They have, perhaps, as a body, been better educated, or, at least, better acquainted with their own literature and with classical antiquity, than men of equal rank in other countries. This was more the case in the sixteenth century than at present. Genius and erudition have been always honoured in Italy; and the more probably that they have not to stand the competition of overpowering wealth, or of political influence.

Their distinctions.

35. Academies of the Italian kind do not greatly favour the vigorous advances in science, and much less the original bursts of genius, for which men of powerful minds are designed by nature. They form an oligarchy, pretending to guide the public taste, as they are guided themselves, by arbitrary maxims and close adherence to precedents. The spirit of criticism they foster is a salutary barrier

Evils connected with them.

* Tiraboschi, viii. ch. 4., is my chief authority about the Italian academies of this period.

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against bad taste and folly, but is too minute and scrupulous in repressing the individualities which characterise real talents, and ends by producing an unblemished mediocrity, without the powers of delight or excitement, for which alone the literature of the imagination is desired.

They succeed less in Germany.

36. In the beginning of this century several societies were set on foot in Germany, for the promotion of ancient learning, besides that already mentioned, of the Rhine, established by Cameraarius of Dalberg, and Conrad Celtes, in the preceding age. Wimpfeling presided over one at Strasburg in 1514, and we find another at Augsburg in 1518. It is probable that the religious animosities which followed stood in the way of similar institutions; or they may have existed without obtaining much celebrity.*

Libraries.

37. Italy was rich, far beyond any other country, in public and private libraries. The Vatican, first in dignity, in antiquity, and in number of books, increased under almost every successive pope, except Julius II., the least favourable to learning of them all. The Laurentian library, purchased by Leo X., before his accession to the papacy, from a monastery at Florence, which had acquired the collection after the fall of the Medici in 1494, was restored to that city by Clement VII., and placed in the newly-erected building which still contains it. The public libraries of Venice and Ferrara were conspicuous; and even a private

* Jugler, in his *Hist. Litteraria*, the Rhine, and one established at Weimar in 1617. p. 1994.

citizen of the former, the Cardinal Grimani, is said to have left one of 8000 volumes; at that time, it appears, a remarkable number.* Those of Heidelberg and Vienna, commenced in the fifteenth century, were still the most distinguished in Germany; and Cardinal Ximenes founded one at Alcala.† It is unlikely that many private libraries of great extent existed in the empire; but the trade of bookselling, though not yet, in general, separated from that of printing, had become of considerable importance.

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* Tiraboschi, viii. 197—219.

† Jugler, Hist. Litteraria, p. 206. et alibi.

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